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Literacy as Power: Creating Socially Just Communities and Futures in Tumultuous Times

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Papers:

COVID-19 and Kindergarten to Grade 5 Teachers' Online Instruction
by Zoi A. Traga Philippakos, University of Tennessee, Knoxville and Ashley Voggt, Texas A&M, Corpus-Christi
Abstract: The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' instructional practices during the transitioned to online instruction that happened because of the pandemic. An effort was made to identify such practices for special education students, general education students, second language learners, examine specifics on teachers' professional development, and finally examine their needs and perspectives about remote instruction. A total of 228 teachers across grades K to 5 participated in an online survey. Responses revealed that teachers were not as confident on the effects of online instruction, and that despite the provision of devices, equitable access to internet was not possible. Teachers' responses also revealed a lack of personnel at the school level to respond to teachers' instructional needs while responses revealed differences on supports provided to second language learners. Implications for teacher preparation programs and for research are further discussed.

Credibility through Inquiry-Based Learning: Lessons from a Multiple-Case Study by Gillian E. Mertens, SUNY Cortland
Abstract: This paper presents findings from a multiple-case study exploring how four 8 th grade students evaluated source credibility while engaged in independent research during an inquiry-based information literacy curriculum. This cross-case Yinian case study explores each student's challenges through research and instructional lenses, including sources cited, strategies

implemented, and the diversity of obstacles students encountered during their independent inquiry. Findings indicated that each student's inquiry elicited specific challenges: a student researching climate justice mistakes scientific consensus for public agreement, a student researching her own identity struggles to find appropriate sources, a student researching a current event keeps pace with rapidly evolving information, and a student determined to ban homework encounters confirmation bias. Lessons learned from these cases bear implications for pragmatic classroom instruction.

Garden of Dreams: First-generation Korean Parents' Book Club by Constance C. Beecher, Ji Yeong I, and Kunhui Kim, Iowa State University
Abstract: Immigrant parents may have difficulty understanding their children's experiences in American schools due to language barriers and cultural differences. To support immigrant parents with children in U.S. schools, we organized a parent book club to give parents from Korea an opportunity to learn about their children's experiences and challenges. Korea is one of the least diverse countries in the world, and individuals may have little exposure to an authentic experience of racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity. In our book club project, two cohorts of participants read diverse children's books in Korean and English, discussed the concepts, and collectively created a story of/for Korean American children.

Developing Preservice Teachers' Cultural Responsiveness through Culturally Authentic Text by Brittany Adams and Annemarie Kaczmarczyk, SUNY Cortland
Abstract: This manuscript focuses on a literature circles assignment implemented within a course focused on culturally and linguistically responsive teaching. The assignment was born from a desire to help preservice teachers (PSTs) recognize how to use adolescent texts to support culturally responsive teaching and social justice education in their future classrooms. PSTs selected adolescent literature featuring main characters from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and formed literature circles based on that selection. Through reading and reflection, PSTs engaged in critical self-examination of their biases, values, and assumptions that impact interactions with culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Culturally Relevant Sustaining Education (CR-SE): Transformative Practices for ELA Teachers who Support ELL Students Utilizing Equity Tools by Shalander "Shelly" Samuels, Kean University
Abstract: While teacher preparation programs have made progress in reorganizing their curricula to better assist English Language Learner (ELL) students, there is still a gap in preparing in-service teachers to instruct this population. When the perceptions of English Language Arts (ELA) teachers' abilities and self-efficacy were analyzed using the Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education (CR-SE) competencies, some teachers exhibited stated they could use more support to build their knowledge and practice to create equitable learning opportunities for English Language Learners (ELLs). Using the CR-SE competencies as a reference, this article aims to analyze secondary ELA instructors' perceptions of educating ELL students. Ten ELL ELA teachers participated in the study to determine their experiences about being prepared to help their ELL student groups. The findings revealed that instructors are devoted to educating diverse student populations but desire additional training and help in adopting and implementing new frameworks in their classrooms. The results have significance for state and district policymakers in supporting the growth of ELL students and their ELA teachers' success.

COVID-19 and Kindergarten to Grade 5 Teachers' Online Instruction

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' instructional practices during the transitioned to online instruction that happened because of the pandemic. An effort was made to identify such practices for special education students, general education students, second language learners, examine specifics on teachers' professional development, and finally examine their needs and perspectives about remote instruction. A total of 228 teachers across grades K to 5 participated in an online survey. Responses revealed that teachers were not as confident on the effects of online instruction, and that despite the provision of devices, equitable access to internet was not possible. Teachers' responses also revealed a lack of personnel at the school level to respond to teachers' instructional needs while responses revealed differences on supports provided to second language learners. Implications for teacher preparation programs and for research are further discussed.

Keywords: COVID-19, teachers' practices, online instruction, professional development,

writing, reading, bilingual learners, special education learners, accommodations

COVID-19 and Kindergarten to Grade 5 Teachers' Online Instruction

COVID-19 forced an abrupt transition from face-to-face to remote learning, also referenced as ‘emergency remote teaching’ (Bozkurt & Sharma 2020) or 'emergency eLearning’ (Murphy, 2020), which is linked to difficulties associated with poor online teaching infrastructure, the inexperience of teachers, the information gap (i.e., limited information and resources to all students), the complex home environment (Zhang et al. 2020), lack of mentoring and support (Judd et al., 2020), and problems related to teachers’ competencies in the use of technology-based instructional formats (Huber & Helm 2020). Carrillo and Flores (2020) analyzed 134 empirical studies of online teaching practices that impacted learning in the context of teacher education. Three interconnected themes were identified related to online teaching and learning practices, including social, cognitive, and teaching presence. First, social presence is described as the ability of learners and teachers to interact, collaborate, and build relationships with others which was reported as a source of satisfaction for students (Biasuttie, 2011) using a variety of tools that facilitate effective engagement and encourage participants to project themselves (e.g., narratives, blogs). Social presence leads to the creation of supportive learning communities characterized by high levels of social presence, which results in solid collaboration, interactivity, mutual respect, shared values, emotional support alleviating feelings of isolation (DeWert et al., 2003), and increased confidence for work (DeWert et al., 2003). Cognitive presence was described in terms of its dependence on other social (e.g., group cohesiveness and an optimal social presence) and teaching issues (e.g., a focus on the learning process rather than the end product or the teacher as a facilitator rather than as a transmitter of knowledge). Social cohesiveness is a prerequisite to knowledge building discourse which typically involves higher-order cognitive skills that require facilitation by educators in the process of constructing meaning

(Ryan & Scott, 2008; Sing & Khime, 2006), including posing questions that deepen individual critical reflection and model reflective thinking (Jones & Ryan, 2014) guiding students to understanding links between theoretical perspectives and coursework. Within and outside these online communities, video models were powerful tools to drive teacher reflection (Beilstein et al., 2020), obtain practical knowledge about the profession (Liu, 2012), and draw connections to content (Lenkaitis, 2020).

The field is shifting from emergency online practices to developing quality online teaching and learning that result from careful instructional design and planning (Hodges et al., 2020). Indeed, COVID-19 has been one of those conditions that affected all learners across the globe. COVID-19 has been a pandemic that altered the way humans communicate, coexist, work, and function daily within a short period of time. For classroom teachers, this pandemic affected how they conduct their learning and how they, as adults, deliver instruction to students.

So far, limited research has examined teachers' transition to online instruction. In July of 2020, Hebert and Colleagues conducted a survey to examine teachers' transition to online instruction and practices in reading, writing, and mathematics. The results from the 308 responders showed that teachers did not believe that remote instruction was effective, while they shared that only 60% of students were ready to be promoted to the next academic grade. This study aimed to examine teachers' perspectives regarding their transition to online and hybrid instruction and the professional development they received; their writing and reading practices; their instructional needs, and their intention to continue with the profession.

Current Study and Research Questions

This current study expands the work conducted by Hebert et al. (2020) in the following ways: First, this current study examines teachers' responses about their practices during an

academic year that teachers were asked to plan for hybrid and online instruction. Second, it examines their responses after they already had a summer to prepare for their instruction and not a couple of weeks (fall 2021). Third, in this work, we added questions to examine access to technology for teachers and students, specific practices for reading and writing, and professional development teachers received for online instruction. Finally, this survey examines teachers' intentions to continue working in the fall or not to understand how the profession is affected. The research questions that guide this investigation are the following:

1. What are teachers' instructional practices for teaching reading and writing of Pre-K to grade 5 learners?
2. What is the technological access for teachers and students?
3. What professional development did teachers receive to support their online instruction?
4. What are teachers' views about the profession?

Methods

Participants and Procedures

Participants were preschool to grade 5 elementary teachers of English Language Arts (*n*= 228). Market Data Retrieval (MDR-Educator) was contacted, a company focused on data services related to education. The researchers requested, for a cost, a random sample of e-mail addresses that reflected the number of teachers in each grade (PreK-5) and their location within the United States (Pacific, Mountain, North Central, South Central, South Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic, and New England). A total of 3,000 emails were requested and delivered.

Survey Tool

The survey included 60-80 questions (the number differed based on participants' choices) and required 20-25 minutes to complete (the average completion time was 21 minutes).

The survey was constructed utilizing items from previous surveys (Cutler & Graham, 2008; Graham et al., 2011; Hebert et al., 2020; Authors, 2017; Authors, 2020) that examined writing practices and professional development in writing, and practices during COVID-19. Items specific to COVID-19 decisions were developed for this work, and some items on instructional practices from previous surveys were adjusted to address COVID-19 conditions. All items were reviewed by classroom teachers who were not participants in this study. Based on their feedback, revisions were made. Then the survey was sent to a group of 10 graduate students who had a career as classroom teachers and were not involved in the development of the survey or knew the purposes of this work. Additional revisions were made based on their feedback. Finally, the final survey was shared with two researchers who are leaders in the field of literacy for their feedback.

The survey was built on the QuestionPro platform. The first page of the survey included the consent form. There was participant representation across regions of the United States (see Table 1 and Table 2); 17.70% of participants taught in rural settings, 46.40% in suburban, and 35.90% in urban. Further, 93.30% taught in public schools and 6.2% in public charters. 36.80% of participants stated that their student population was majority low socioeconomic status (SES), 37.80% stated it was medium-low SES, 22% of medium-high SES, and 3.30% of high SES; 69.50% of teachers lived in the same area they taught (county and district), and 30.50% did not. 35.10% of teachers had a bachelor's degree, 61% had a master's degree, and 4% had an Ed.D or Ph.D.

Table 1. Percentage of Participants per Region

Region	%
Pacific (California, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii, Alaska, the Canadian province of British Columbia)	8.70
Mountain (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming)	9.60
East North Central (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin)	8.10
West North Central (Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota)	7.60
West South Central (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas)	10.30
East South Central (Kentucky, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee)	14.90
South Atlantic (Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina,	15.40
Georgia, Florida, the District of Columbia)	9.80
Mid-Atlantic (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania)	9.60
New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont)	6.00

Table 2. Participants' Grade-Level Distribution

Ethnicity	**Gender**			**Total**
	Male	Female	Other	
American Indian or Alaska Native	1 (.48%)			1 (.48%)
Asian		4 (1.92%)		4 (1.92%)
Black or African American		8 (3.84%)		8 (3.84%)
Hispanic or Latino/a	1 (.48%)	10 (4.81%)	1 (.48%)	12 (5.77%)

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander			0
Caucasian/White	16 (7.69%)	162 (20.25%)	178 (85.57%)
Other	1	4	5 (2.41%
			208

Survey Components

Student access to online instruction. To answer whether the transition to online instruction was equitable and supported all learners, we asked what the mode of instruction was; whether all students had access to computers; whether the school provided devices to students; what those devices were; if teachers knew that students had access to those devices; if students' devices had a camera; if students had internet access; if there were libraries close to students' homes; and if libraries remained open for students to access their resources.

Teacher access to online instruction and preparation time. We asked teachers if they had access to devices to conduct their instruction; if their instruction was hybrid, entirely online, or face-to-face; whether they had access to the internet; what learning management system was used at their school (e.g., Canvas), and what resources their school provided. We asked teachers how much time they spent preparing to provide online instruction and whether they were compensated for additional time.

Reading and writing instructional practices during online instruction. We asked teachers to share if they provided direct instruction with modeling of reading strategies, if they read aloud, if there was collaborative practice with students, shared reading, partner reading, recording of independent reading by students that they sent to teachers, and representation of their oral reading progress on a graph. Similar questions were asked for writing instructional practices with the addition of a question that asked whether instruction engaged students in goal setting. Teachers were also asked to share if they graded assignments.

Instructional practices for students with Learning Disabilities and for English Language Learners. Teachers were asked to share the frequency of accommodations they or other personnel provided to LD students, and the frequency they met in small groups with learners. Similar questions were asked for English Language Learners (ELL). A range of frequency times was provided for teachers to select.

Teacher Professional Development. To better understand what supports were provided to teachers for this transition to online instruction, we asked if they could share whether they received PD on online instruction by their sites/districts, what this PD involved, and its quality (from their perspective). Further, we asked if they sought additional sources of professional learning to respond to the needs of online instruction, what those were, and what the support personnel was.

Longevity of online instruction. Teachers were asked to share if they believed that online instruction would continue after the end of the pandemic (response as a Yes or No) and what would be needed for such instruction to be conducted effectively.

Teachers' future in the profession. To examine the effects of the transition to online instruction on teachers' morale, we asked if they planned to continue in the profession or were thinking of changing careers or retiring.

Analysis

The study is descriptive in nature and attempts to better understand the effects of the pandemic on teachers' instructional practices and remote instruction as well as equitable practices for students. Frequencies and proportions (Field, 2013) report teachers' practices, access to the internet, access to computers (for teachers and students), access to libraries, and provision of professional development when transitioning to online instruction. Written responses regarding

why teachers choose to abandon the profession and their general comments about the profession and their role were analyzed to identify patterns and common themes. Specifically, responses were gathered by theme. Codes were assigned with the first author coding all responses. A graduate assistant independently applied the codes to 5 responses initially and then to all as there was high agreement on their application.

Results

Student access to online instruction. Nearly half of teachers reported teaching in person (49%), with 26.50% in hybrid mode and 24.50% entirely remotely. 98.6% of teachers shared that their school provided students with devices for remote instruction. The majority of devices were Chromebooks (26.30%), while computers (5.3%), iPads (6.1%), and tablets (.9%) were also used. 8.2% of teachers were not aware of their students' internet access. In comparison, 71.4% reported that more than 15 of their learners did have access, 6.8% 11 to 15 learners had access, 9.5% 7 to 10 learners, 2.7% 4 to 6 learners, .7% reported no student access, and .7% access for 1-3 students. Even though the majority reported that approximately half a class did have access to the internet, the other half did not. When asked about overall access to computers, teachers' responses revealed that 12.9% were unsure about students' access. 70.70% shared that more than 15 learners had access, 6.8% that 11 to 15 had access, 3.4% shared that 7 to 10 did, and 4.8% that 4 to 6 had access overall.7% shared that no student had access. When asked about the number of libraries in the area, 17% of teachers reported that they did not know how many libraries were in their school area (in the area where their school's students were drawn from). In comparison, 6.8% said there were no libraries, 46.90% said one library, and 28.60 more than two libraries. Regarding library access due to lockdowns, 37.40% did not know if libraries remained

open, 29.9% shared that no library remained open, 23.10% said that one did, and 8.8.% that two remained open.

Teacher access to online instruction and preparation time. Teachers who taught remotely shared that they used Google Classroom (14%), Canvas (8.8.%), eLearning cloud (3.9%), Zoom (13.60%), as well as a variety of other management systems teachers utilized. All teachers had access to a computer, and 89.20% reported that their school provided them with a computer. 10.8% shared they had to purchase a computer

Teachers shared that they spent, on average, an hour a day preparing for their online instruction in addition to their regular preparation time (15.8%), less than three hours a day (55.3%), less than six hours a day (17.10%) and six or more hours a day (11.8%); 95.9% of teachers reported that they were not compensated for the additional time spent in preparation.

Reading and writing instructional practices during online instruction. In their responses, many teachers proceeded with direct, daily instruction on reading (47.90%) and writing (36.10%). They also engaged students in collaborative reading assignments daily, and high percentage of them conducted read alouds daily (45.80%) and several times a day (14.60%). Instruction on vocabulary words was daily for many teachers (36.80%). Still, practice reading to each other was not as possible (41%) or recording of students' reading for the teacher to review (55.60%) or student representation of their reading progress on a graph (70.8%). Collaboration on writing was not as possible (41%), but students completed independent writing tasks daily (35.40%) without graphing their writing performance (79.90%) or setting goals (57%).

Instructional practices for students with Learning Disabilities and for English Language Learners. The frequency of accommodations provided to LD students varied among teachers, but 44.4% met daily with students, and (10.6%) met several times a day. Teachers

shared that other personnel met daily with LD students (32.40%) or several times a day (32.40%), while support was in small groups daily (36.60%), several times a day (24.60%); 3.5% of teachers shared that they never provided accommodations for LD learners. Accommodations were never offered by 12% of teachers to ELLs, while 34.50% delivered accommodations daily and 19.70% several times a day.

Teacher evaluation of online instruction and preparation. Teachers shared that online instruction was not as effective in supporting students' writing instruction (61.10%), and 37.80% were uncertain of the effects. Similarly, teachers did not find that reading instruction online was effective (45.80%), and 30.60% were uncertain. It should be noted that almost double the number of teachers found that reading online was more effective than writing online (23.60% for reading and 11.10% for writing). Teachers' judgment of students' overall learning was that it was impossible to happen effectively (45.80% of teachers), 34.70% were not sure, and 19.40% found that learning online was effective.

When asked to evaluate their preparation to teach writing, 13.60% shared they were extremely well prepared, 17.90% not at all prepared, and 20.70% slightly prepared. When asked to share their experiences with reading, 17.90% shared they were extremely well prepared, but 12.10% stated they were not as well prepared to teach reading. The majority of participants shared that they were not prepared to teach online (68.60%), and only 2.9% shared that they had the preparation to do so.

Teacher Professional Development. Most teachers received PD to transition to online instruction (79.20%). Out of the 43 teachers who explained what this PD entailed, 20 shared they completed Canvas training, 26 Canvas and Google Classroom, five on Zoom, and four on the use of Distance Learning Playbook or Schoology. Teachers evaluated their PD as being average

(45.60%), somewhat poor (14%), poor (5.30%), very good (31.60%), and exceptional (3.5%). They shared that they sought other ways to improve their understanding of online instruction by purchasing books (5.3%), attending webinars (22.50%), and by reading articles (11.1%).

Longevity of online instruction. The majority of teachers believed that online instruction would proceed after COVID-19 (70%); 81.20% believed that online instruction could potentially be effective and shared challenges that prevented this during their experience with online teaching: student computer access (5.30%), student internet access (9.7%), teacher preparation to teach online (15%), 4.8% selected other as a choice.

Teachers' future in the profession. The majority of teachers shared they would continue in the profession (98.7%), while the rest shared they would proceed with early retirement. In their explanations, teachers expressed the challenges faced within the profession and that students, despite their improper preparation, were promoted to the next grades.

Open response. Teachers' responses were classified across the following themes: Teacher underappreciation, love for the profession, need for accountability, and opportunity for learning. Specifically, 50 teachers responded to this question, and 25 commented on the lack of appreciation that teachers constantly received from their administration, families, policies, and the public.

> *The teaching profession is continuously being undermined by parents, administrators, and the government with overreach by the government for what is taught in the curriculum and by the parents by not thinking of teachers as a professional voice that works with their child, but as a person that happens to teach their child things while watching them during the day.*

Teachers expressed a feeling of being blamed for what they could not control, "*WE ARE PROFESSIONALS. We deserve to be treated as such. The ills of society are NOT our fault*." They also commented on the effects of policies on their instruction, with some explicitly commenting on the interference of politics in decision-making at their schools and districts. Teachers commented on the lack of compensation during the pandemic and the lack of a salary that reflected the amount of work and effort they put into their work. They shared that they did make significant efforts to reach their students, but their responses indicated a sense of defeat. One respondent said, "*Teachers have gone above and beyond regardless of what we had in our hands. Teachers are heroes, too*." All teachers shared they loved to teach, and some expressed this in these exact words when describing their enthusiasm for the profession. However, their statements addressed a lack of understanding of the needs of their work.

Discussion

This study aimed to examine teachers' perspectives regarding their transition to online and hybrid instruction; teachers' instructional practices; teachers' PD to transitioning to online instruction; teachers' additional needs, and their intention to continue with the profession. Results revealed that the transition to online teaching was challenging despite a summer to prepare for it. Schools provided devices to all students, and teachers were able to support learning online. However, teachers' responses revealed that not all students had access to cameras, and not all students had access to the internet. Technology can be used to overcome barriers of space and time; however, the pandemic revealed a *digital divide* between those who have or do not have access to technology and *digital use divide* between those who have or do not have the knowledge or proficiency in using educational technology. Both divides must be

addressed to ensure equitably designed instruction (Hall et al., 2020). Equity-based educator preparation programs must train teachers to maintain strong relationships with families by emphasizing the need for communication to focus on the socio-emotional well-being of the student and families, as well as academic development to facilitate transitioning from crisis management to innovation and transformation during the pandemic (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020).

Implications

In this work, we examined teachers' responses using a survey tool and without the opportunity to follow up with them for additional clarifications. Future research could explore teachers' responses on the survey and proceed with interviews, especially of those who choose to leave the profession or express challenges in preparation. Such conversations can further inform the community on the types of revisions that education preparation providers should consider to better support the development of preservice teachers in writing, reading, and online instruction as this relates to using technologies and online tools. In addition, interviews could have been conducted with students to have a much more comprehensive view of challenges from the perspective of students, teachers, and administrators.

Limitations. Even though the goal was for this study to provide a national view of the challenges and successes of the profession, participation was not as high as anticipated. It is recognizable that the pandemic affected teachers who were called to respond on several levels and support students' academic needs. Further, this work did not examine teachers' socio-emotional well-being and needs related to supports that could enhance their instruction and their and their students' socio-emotional well-being.

Conclusion

The pandemic conditions reflect a new normal in education by attending to the operation of power and control within conventional models of care in education. Also, educators and policymakers should reflect on the underlying discrepancy in power related to equitable digital technologies in educational contexts. Finally, relatedness in education is associated with a moral imperative to develop teacher education programs that reach beyond local contexts to foster social justice and a meaningful global mindset that requires a transformation of our identities.

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Credibility Through Inquiry-Based Learning: Lessons from a Multiple-Case Study

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Abstract

This paper presents findings from a multiple-case study exploring how four 8th grade students evaluated source credibility while engaged in independent research during an inquiry-based information literacy curriculum. This cross-case Yinian case study explores each student's challenges through research and instructional lenses, including sources cited, strategies implemented, and the diversity of obstacles students encountered during their independent inquiry. Findings indicated that each student's inquiry elicited specific challenges: a student researching climate justice mistakes scientific consensus for public agreement, a student researching her own identity struggles to find appropriate sources, a student researching a current event keeps pace with rapidly evolving information, and a student determined to ban homework encounters confirmation bias. Lessons learned from these cases bear implications for pragmatic classroom instruction.

Keywords: Information literacy, credibility, digital reading, online inquiry

Credibility Through Inquiry-Based Learning: Lessons from a Multiple-Case Study

As educators prepare young people to be literate in the 21st century, scholars have turned their attention to how students make sense of online information. Educators and educational researchers wonder how to balance students' real-world literacy needs with reading instruction, particularly as online information proliferates and spreads far beyond traditional editorial measures (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017; Mertens & Kohnen, 2022). Inquiry-based learning (IBL) approaches to information literacy instruction have been promoted as vehicles for students to develop information literacy skills while retaining agency over the content of their learning (Coiro et al., 2016; Kuhlthau et al., 2015). Yet, when every student is conducting a unique online inquiry, each student encounters unique information and credibility obstacles. Making sense of how students evaluate, question, and synthesize sources within independent inquiry contexts is challenging.

With this challenge in mind, this article explores how students evaluated the credibility of online information throughout a year-long information literacy inquiry-based curriculum. This multiple-case study describes insights gleaned from students' independent inquiry across diverse topics and inquiry questions. These cases demonstrate the challenges and affordances that individualized inquiry topics present for middle-grade learners as they evaluate online information.

Literature Review

Information Literacy

The Association of College and Research Libraries (2015) defines information literacy as "the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating

new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning." This definition emphasizes reflecting upon discoveries, understanding information's production and evolution as a continuous process, and the ethical use of information to create new knowledge. As information architecture has evolved, information literacy's definition has adapted to reflect the nuanced ways individuals currently encounter and use online information (Livingstone et al., 2008). The above description provides a framework for considering how to prepare young people to locate and use 21st-century information. Accessing and using information are just two practices in a more extensive repertoire; understanding what practices students apply during online inquiry can aid teachers in supporting all students as they explore widely diverse topics.

Information Seeking During Online Inquiry

This study builds upon the decades of scholarship arguing that information and digital literacies are contextually dependent, socially situated, and inherently complex (e.g., Hobbs, 2020; Hobbs, 2010; Leu et al., 2013; Livingstone et al., 2008; New London Group, 1996). IBL approaches to information literacy emerge from library science (e.g., Kuhlthau et al., 2015), information sciences (e.g., Hepworth & Walton, 2009), and literacy (e.g., Coiro et al., 2016). Despite these diverse origins, information literacy-based IBL curricula maintain similar principles: students' ability to identify a research question, locate and evaluate pertinent information, and do something with that information are critical skills for an educated, competent citizenry.

Inquiry-based literacy learning research has explored students' literacy practices during online inquiry (e.g., Coiro et al., 2016), students' evaluation of online texts and sources (e.g., Castek et al., 2012; Eagleton & Dobler, 2006; Kiili et al., 2019), students' ability to collaboratively locate and read online information (e.g., Sekeres & Castek, 2016), student use of

criteria and strategies while evaluating online information (e.g., Coiro & Dobler, 2007; Coiro et al., 2015), and group dynamics' effect on online inquiry (e.g., Castek et al., 2012; Kiili et al., 2019). This study explores the literacy practices of four students conducting an online inquiry and begins to relate these practices to classroom instruction.

Theoretical Framework

For decades, new literacy scholars have indicated that social forces drive a need for new literacies and literacy practices, including increasing evidence of an information economy, the ubiquitous role of the Internet in all aspects of life, and educational policies that call for technologically and digitally literate learners (Coiro et al., 2008; Leu et al., 2017; Leu et al., 2013; Livingstone et al., 2008). New literacies position information-seeing and evaluation as problem-based inquiry processes involving new information practices. Models including Freebody and Luke's four resource model (Freebody & Luke, 1999) and multiliteracies theory (New London Group, 1996) position the literacies necessary to navigate online information as part of a repertoire of literacy practices. As I consider what strategic practices these students use to evaluate and use online information effectively, I do so while recognizing that learners must have agency, voice, and choice as they acquire digital, media, and information literacies (Coiro & Hobbs, 2016).

Although this study could be situated within multiple pertinent theoretical frameworks (e.g., multiliteracies [New London Group, 1996] or the four-resource model [Freebody & Luke, 1999; Serafini, 2012]), I situate this analysis within New Literacies Studies. In their update of New Literacies for the age of information and communication technologies, the authors argue that the Internet is now the "defining technology for literacy and learning" (Leu et al., 2017, p. 326). As such, this study responds to that call by exploring how students evaluated online

information within the context of a formative design experimental curriculum nicknamed The Wonder Project.

An additional theoretical understanding that informed this analysis is the body of literature demonstrating that evaluating information credibility requires navigating complex information contexts, increasingly polished information cues, the evolving nature of misinformation and disinformation, and the social pressures inherent on social media platforms (e.g., Metzger & Flanagan, 2015; Lewandowsky et al., 2017; Metzger et al., 2010; Sundar et al., 2015). As students navigate online environments, they may be presented with some, all, or none of these challenges and additional challenges yet unidentified. Because, as Leu et al. (2019) argues, the Internet is the defining technology for literacy and learning, understanding the emergent challenges during students' information-seeking and evaluation supports the development of new literacies. To that end, the following New Literacies multiple-case study examines how four students made sense of online information during a year-long inquiry curriculum intended to teach information literacy skills and dispositions within the context of an inquiry project.

The Wonder Project Curriculum

The Wonder Project was a year-long information literacy curriculum for students in Grade 8 implemented at a K-12 lab school in a southeastern state. 115 grade 8 students participated in this curriculum across content areas from September 2019 to March 2020, the project's pilot year. The school's student population largely represents the residing state's racial and ethnic demographics. For more detail on the Wonder Project curriculum, see Mertens et al., 2021.

Overview

The Wonder Project's theoretical foundation is "generalist literacy," defined as the literacies needed to investigate topics about which the information seeker has limited background knowledge, including personal health needs and civic issues (Kohnen & Mertens, 2019; Mertens et al., 2021; Kohnen & Saul, 2020). The curriculum incorporated skills instruction from Civic Online Reasoning, such as lateral reading and checking a website's funder (McGrew, 2020; Wineburg et al., 2016; Wineburg & McGrew, 2019), as practical skills like these enable learners to evaluate online information competently and quickly. See Table 1 for an overview of the Wonder Project curriculum and foci.

Table 1

Wonder Project Curricular Focuses

Curriculum	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
Identity Focus	Skepticism	Accuracy	Persistence
Inquiry Goals	Develop an inquiry question	Locate, evaluate, and annotate sources	Synthesize information-seeking into a response to the inquiry question
Checkpoint Assignment	Research proposal[a]	Annotated bibliography[a]	Quarter 3 check-in document[a]
ELA Lesson Focus	Skepticism towards images[a]	Information cycle scenarios[a]	Aligning inquiry purpose and audience
Math Lesson Focus	Graphs and data visualization	Lateral reading practice[a]	Work block for independent inquiry[a]
Social Studies Lesson Focus	Multiple perspectives and primary sources	Corroborating claims and source inconsistencies	Work block for independent inquiry[a]

Note: Due to COVID-19, the Wonder Project curriculum's Quarter 4 was not completed as planned. Students would have shared their inquiry projects with chosen audiences in Quarter 4.

* Indicates data source.

The Wonder Project curriculum involved a series of lessons, activities, and strategies aligning with the identity elements of generalists. To compliment these lessons using existing resources, the curriculum development team drew from information literacy intervention

scholarship, including Wineburg et al.'s (2011) lessons on teaching historical literacy, *New York Times* Learning Network activity "What's Going on in This Graph," and content from *Snopes,* a fact-checking website.

The curriculum team adopted an inquiry-based learning approach that engaged learners in actively building skills and knowledge through generating and answering authentic research questions (Buchanan et al., 2016; Chu et al., 2017; Kuhlthau et al., 2015). Wonder Project Quarters 1 and 2 focused on developing an awareness of the landscape of information and developing information-literacy skills, including orienting oneself and lateral reading. During Quarter 3, we began transitioning away from researcher-led curriculum activity, giving students large blocks of time to conduct their inquiries. During this time, students researched their inquiry question and completed their Quarter 3 Check-In Document: a series of questions that served as a preliminary research report of students' progress. Researchers and classroom teachers circulated throughout the room, working with individual students and checking on progress. As the third quarter ended and most students submitted their check-in documents, students pivoted from information-seeking to selecting and creating a product. The research team helped students identify a research audience and product through project proposals and check-ins.

Data Sources

In concert with the author, collaborating classroom teachers collected multiple sources of student data throughout the Wonder Project implementation from 2019 to 2020. The following section provides an overview of the data sources used in this study.

Quarter 1 involved students' first tentative engagements with their inquiry questions and one information literacy-specific lesson engaging students' skepticism regarding online images.

The data source documents include a Wonder Project Hopes document (1.1) and a Research Proposal document (1.2).

Quarter 2 involved students developing discrete information-seeking skills through lessons designed to reinforce knowledge practices that expert information-seekers have. The first data sources from Quarter 2 involve documents from two curriculum lessons: a lesson involving information seeking scenarios (2.1; see also Kohnen & Mertens, in press) and a lateral reading activity inspired by Wineburg & McGrew (2019) involving evaluating three sources on vaccines (2.2). The benchmark assignment for Quarter 2 was students' annotated bibliography (2.3) completed in three columns. The first column, "New Information," prompted students to record "What information did you learn about your topic and wondering?" The second column, "Source," asked students to record "Where did you get the information?" The third column, "Annotation," challenge students to question, "Why does this information matter? How does this information challenge, change, or confirm your thinking?" For exemplars of students' annotations, see Appendix A.

During Quarter 3, students spent most of their time finishing their research and synthesizing their conclusions. Rather than conducting intervention lessons, the research team decided to use guest lecture blocks as student work time. Alongside other members of the Wonder Project team, I worked with individual students to locate and interpret sources. At the beginning and the end of the work blocks, students completed a daily reflection and a progress check-in (3.1, 3.2). At the end of Quarter 3, students completed a Check-In Document (3.3) to assess students' Wonder Project progress. Students reported their research topic and question, sample sources, what they have learned so far, and different perspectives that exist related to their topics. The third subsection asks what numbers and data are essential to students' questions,

and the fourth subsection asks about what myths and misinformation exist on their topic. The fifth subsection asks about what potential audiences might be interested in, the students' purpose in sharing the information, and how they would share their information in the future.

Methods

This multiple-case study examines how four students evaluated source credibility during a novel information literacy IBL curriculum called The Wonder Project (Mertens et al., 2021). This study explores these four students' evaluative approaches to online information encountered during the inquiry. As such, the question that guided this study was: How did students evaluate the credibility of online information within an inquiry-based information literacy curriculum?

Data Collection

All data for this study was collected from August 2019 to March 2020. The author and research team collected data for in-class activities at the end of each lesson. Data analysis began six months after the initial Wonder Project implementation for this study.

Case Selection

All eighth-grade students at the participating school participated in the Wonder Project, and all students with IRB parent consent were part of this study's original participant pool. For this study, I define a case as a single student's work throughout the Wonder Project curriculum (August 2019 to March 2020). To select participant cases, I employed a three-phase approach using theoretical sampling (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) based on the inquiry topic, which enables the review of various types of sources (e.g., academic articles, historical retrospectives). In the first phase, I took all student inquiry topics and constructed broad topics based on the discipline of their inquiry question (e.g., history, sports). Then, I identified 14 students with diverse inquiry

foci (e.g., baseball history, how vocal words work). In the second phase, I reviewed selected students' work to identify missing data and selected four students who provided cited sources at all checkpoints.

Data Analysis

This study's case selection and analysis were independently conducted as part of my doctoral dissertation and used data collected by myself and the Wonder Project team members during the 2019-2020 Wonder Project curriculum (see Mertens et al., 2021).

Yinian case studies (Yin, 2018) promote protocols for case study analysis and promote single-case analysis prior to any cross-case synthesis. Using a question-based single case analysis protocol (See Appendix B), I created a matrix to analyze students' lesson performance and independent inquiry, where columns represented each student case and rows represented various components of the Wonder Project. After completing single-case matrixes and analytic memos, I prepared for cross-case analysis by examining within-case matrixes for repeated patterns. I conducted within-case analysis by examining documents and writing analytic memos and conducted a cross-case analysis using an extended question-based cross-case analysis matrix (See Appendix C). An external experienced qualitative coder used the cross-case matrix for a corroborative analysis.

My role within the Wonder Project influenced data analysis. I developed the curriculum for the Wonder Project, designed the intervention lessons, and guest-taught alongside classroom teachers, thus deeply weaving m perspectives on pedagogy and information literacy into the program's development (see Mertens et al., 2021). Thus, I adopted two roles during the analysis: my researcher-self and my teacher-self. My researcher-self was attuned to information literacy practices and insights into middle-grade learners' information evaluation; my teacher-self was

attuned to the classroom environment, student engagement, and developing pragmatic lessons that our collaborating classroom teachers could eventually implement independently. These two aspects of my positionality became prominent during analysis, and I wrote analytic memos to differentiate between my teacher-self's tendency towards instructional pragmatism and my researcher-self's tendency to focus on socially contextualized online literacies. Moments when my teacher-self and researcher-self were at odds pointed to tensions highlighted within the discussion.

Single-Case Challenges

Each of the four cases below (all names are pseudonyms) presents a unique student, inquiry question, and obstacle encountered. For an overview of each student's inquiry, see Table 2. Data sources listed above are indicated with numbers in parentheticals (e.g., 1.2).

Table 2

Student Inquiry Case Overview

Participant	Research Question	Question Domain	Sample Information Sources
Kaitlyn	How does climate change affect us and our planet?	Science	EOS.org Globalchange.gov Worldwildlife.org Climateandweather.net Blogs.ei.columbia.edu
Elena	How does the history of my family in Lebanon affect my identity and culture today?	Identity and Culture	Mytutor.co.uk Study.com Brittanica.com Churchofjesuschrist.org Her grandmother
Ben	Why are foreign governments letting/enabling China to carry out [violence against Hong Kong protestors] and why there has been so little coverage of the protests.	Current Events	BBC.com Wikipedia.org Dailymail.co.uk SCMP.com VanityFair.com
Jonah	Does homework actually help us learn?	Education	Procon.org Huffingtonpost.com Bostonia.edu Greatschools.org Forbes.com

Kaitlyn: Unaware of Public Controversy

Kaitlyn's inquiry question was, "How does climate change affect us and our planet?" (1.2). In her annotated bibliography, Kaitlyn cited highly credible scientific sources that provided specific examples (e.g., the mating of roe deer, increased length of allergy seasons). Kaitlyn's annotations precisely indicated how the information challenges, confirms, or changes her thinking, as well as listing a specific piece of evidence that she could later draw upon (e.g., "This source confirms my thinking of the idea that humans are most likely the main cause of climate change," 2.3).

However, close examination of Kaitlyn's materials revealed a subtle yet pressing conundrum. When asked about multiple perspectives on her topic, Kaitlyn said, "I think most people can agree that climate change is a big issue" (3.3), and when asked about misinformation, she responded "So far, I haven't come across misleading information" (3.3) Kaitlyn did not encounter climate change misinformation *or notice that climate change denial exists at all*.

Kaitlyn was an exceptionally diligent student who was able to find highly credible sources that included specific examples of climate change impact (2.3, 3.3). However, Kaitlyn's inability to identify climate change misinformation sparked tension between my teacher-self and researcher-self. On the one hand, I balk at pushing a student to learn about climate change denial as an alternative perspective to climate change; on the other, climate change denial advocacy and propaganda have a significant effect on policy, regulations, and curricula. In fact, cognitive psychology scholars list climate change denial as an exemplar of misinformation (Lewandowsky et al., 2017). Kaitlyn's unawareness of climate change denial puts her argument at a disadvantage: There is scientific consensus on climate change, but the consensus in the public

sphere is less resounding. According to all of Kaitlyn's data sources, she never reports encountering credible information demonstrating dissent over climate change.

Elena: Focus on Research Question

Elena's research question was, "How does the history of my family in Lebanon affect my identity and culture today?" (1.2). Elena was the only case who used a person as an information source; she spoke with her grandmother about her immigration experience. Elena reported,

> My grandpa's grandmother was sent when she was 12 from Lebanon to go to America where she would start a new life... There she met my grandfather's grandpa, but I think he came from New York. She was an immigrant coming to the new world because America was the 'trend' (2.3).

These insights could have led Elena to explore Lebanese immigration through Ellis Island and thus to identify that most Lebanese immigration to America occurred between 1890 and 1920 (i.e., the "trend" that Elena's grandmother indicates). Unfortunately, Elena's annotation for this information lacks synthesis: "This confirmed my thinking because I knew most of these details already" (2.3). This pattern emerged across Elana's inquiry: she could find orienting tertiary sources, like Encyclopedia Britannica and Cultural Atlas, but was unable to synthesize between these sources (2.3, 3.2, 3.3). Multiple research team members worked with Elena and reviewed her documents, including myself, and no member of the team noted Elena's struggle—we were more concerned with students who had not submitted any work.

Elena demonstrated practices highlighted by the Wonder Project curriculum: she found orienting resources, used them to orient herself, and remained curious. Additionally, in these cases, Elena was the only student to identify an obstacle in her research process: Elena reported that her inquiry question was too broad and perhaps unanswerable (2.3, 3.1, 3.2). She was also

the only student case lacking concrete information related to her inquiry question (2.3, 3.3). Indeed, Elena may not have been able to apply other information literacy practices necessary to answer her question (e.g., knowing the different types of sources, finding a starting place, and the relationship between depth/time, as well as generalist actions like digging, questioning, and synthesizing while seeking). While she claims to have learned a lot and enjoyed the process (3.2, 3.3), Elena did not find enough information to address her question satisfactorily.

Throughout this project, Elena demonstrated that she learned more about herself while discussing connections between her family and gained more understanding of her family's dynamic. I doubt that, in retrospect, Elena would perceive this project as anything but an accomplishment. According to her check-in documents, she feels like she learned a bit more about her family. The only element missing from her work was the information literacy practices that comprised the intent of the Wonder Project.

Ben: Evolving Current Events

Ben was interested in the conflict between the Chinese government and Hong Kong protestors which took place concurrently with the project. Ben's research question was, "Why are foreign governments/companies letting/enabling China to carry out these acts, and why has there been so little coverage of the protests?" (3.3).

Ben showed his ability to synthesize sources while searching, an essential element of information-seeking and inquiry (Kohnen & Mertens, 2019; Kuhlthau et al., 2015). With a combination of facts, cause and effect relationships, and inferencing, Ben developed arguments within his curricular artifacts involving refuting misinformation (e.g., "[The Wikipedia Article] matters because it shows that protestors have been injured… I could not find any reports of more than 3 injuries on any news site," 2.3) and linking cause and effect by tying Western trade

interests with Hong Kong protests (e.g., annotating a list of Western companies affiliated with Chinese trade routes as reasons "why large Western companies might defend China," 3.3). Ben's annotation reveals that he was not only looking through information for factual tidbits, but he was also synthesizing sources throughout his inquiry.

Ben grappled with misinformation and disinformation more directly than any other three cases. Ben identified that the Chinese government was spreading disinformation about the protests and highlighted instances of misinformation (e.g., "I have found news coverage run by the Chinese government saying no one has died and the police are in grave danger," 3.3). The corpus of Ben's inquiry indicates a developing explanatory argument that could address, if not answer, his research question—with the core of his argument relating to information's credibility and verifiability.

Ben's information-seeking process was an intriguing aspect of his inquiry. Unlike the other cases, Ben selected a current events topic where (a) the nature of current events challenged him to make sense of an evolving narrative and (b) misinformation and disinformation inherently characterized the nature of his inquiry. To successfully interrogate his topic, Ben needed to synthesize sources and orient himself without the benefit of historical perspectives and scientific consensus. Ben demonstrated his ability to synthesize sources through the annotated bibliography despite these challenges. His annotations reinforced why this information mattered to his topic, and he reflected upon the presence and absence of explanatory information. Ben's body of information literacy practices was well suited to his topic and indicated the need for a different approach to current events inquiry.

Jonah

Jonah's research question was, "Does homework actually help us learn?" (1.1; 2.3). From the onset, Jonah's default mode for evaluating information was corroboration, and he tended to information against other information and identified consensus across sources (1.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3). This tendency towards corroboration mirrored historical literacy practices (e.g., [provide an example]; Wineburg, 1991) that do not always translate to evaluating online information (Wineburg & McGrew, 2019; Wineburg et al., 2016). Nevertheless, Jonah's repeated emphasis on corroboration characterized his information-seeking approach.

While Jonah openly sought multiple perspectives on homework, most of Jonah's sources reflected his preconceived notion that homework was not beneficial. Jonah's motive throughout the project was explicit. According to Jonah's research proposal, Jonah wanted to "change the face of American education for all children"—specifically by "banning homework" (1.2)

Jonah exclusively relied upon credible online sources in his annotated bibliography, and many sources involved journalists' summaries of peer-reviewed research. Jonah used ProCon.org, a news aggregator that takes a debate-style approach to content (2.3). Jonah did not seem aware that ProCon.org was a news aggregator since he listed ProCon.org as the source for six of his nine annotations (2.3). Although his research question focused on homework's impact on learning, Jonah's sources and annotations focused instead on homework's mental and emotional toll. Of Jonah's nine annotations, only two annotations addressed homework's effect on learning (2.3).

Jonah demonstrated an interesting pattern in his annotated bibliography and check-in document: when he wrote his annotations, Jonah tended to take measured statements and make them absolute. To demonstrate, one of Jonah's sources read: "An article published in the *Review of Educational Research* reported that 'in elementary school, homework had no association with

achievement gains' when measured by standardized test results or grades." The article provided limitations, including focusing on elementary and standardized or graded outcomes. Yet, Jonah's annotation for this source read, "This source confirms my thinking that there is no evidence that homework helps us in any way" (3.2). Moreover, his annotation contradicted another annotated bibliography entry that asserts that homework helps elementary students develop skills necessary throughout schooling (3.2). Jonah never acknowledged this contradiction.

Like Kaitlyn, Jonah found credible sources related to his inquiry topic. Unlike Kaitlyn, Jonah's topic was action-oriented and involved answering an inquiry question that Jonah felt he already knew: that homework has no benefit to students. Using an inquiry question to guide the inquiry process to ultimately address the question (Kuhlthau et al., 2015) is a crucial element of IBL—yet Jonah's preconceived notions, rather than inquiry, guided his research. While Jonah's corroborative process aided him in interpreting multiple perspectives on homework, Jonah's documents reveal his struggle to nuance his position (1.1, 1.2, 2.3, 3.3). Nevertheless, I recognize the limited time afforded to this project. Jonah needed scaffolding from the research team members to align his inquiry, goals, and argument to make a policy argument.

Lessons Learned

Kaitlyn, Elena, Ben, and Jonah all performed admirably on the Wonder Project. Nevertheless, students encountered obstacles pertaining to the complex and rapidly evolving online information ecosystem in all cases. Her unawareness of misinformation limited Kaitlyn's inquiry of the climate change landscape of information (1.2, 2.3, 3.3). Elena's identity-centered question did not enable her to refine her information literacy practices; she seemed unable to meaningfully answer her inquiry question (1.2, 2.3, 3.1-3.3). Ben could only keep pace with his current-events topic due to his extensive interest and work beyond class. Jonah's consideration of

inquiry as an opportunity for argument led him to avoid nuance in his process. Each of these students grappled with different types of information within different disciplines—and not all students used the information literacy skills reinforced by the curriculum.

So, where do we go from here? How can we support our students through authentic online inquiry when doing so requires tremendous amounts of time and knowledge? How can we not engage students in online inquiry, as students construct the knowledge and schema necessary to understand information's structures and evaluation processes?

My teacher-self and researcher-self both argue that considering *which types* of inquiry questions or problems might activate specific information literacy practices. For example, current event questions like Ben's would help students track an evolving issue with attention to what is known and unknown. Kaitlyn's climate change question would be a great opportunity to discuss misinformation and scientific consensus and to help students learn to evaluate claims factually. Elena's question is a perfect opportunity to help students create knowledge about personal experiences or cultural histories; students could conduct interviews or oral histories that explore an element of themselves. Finally, Peter's charge against homework would allow students to identify and challenge confirmation bias. We all have deeply held beliefs, and questions like Peter's give learners the opportunity to nuance their inquiry questions. Future research is necessary to explore these classroom applications.

Translating pedagogical theory to pragmatic curricula always involves compromises, caveats, and challenges. Curriculum developers must negotiate their priorities with the priorities of classroom collaborators situated within what is feasible within a school context. Within the Wonder Project, we were challenged to address the priorities of stakeholders, including classroom teachers, while reinforcing essential information literacy tenets within a limited time

span. Yet, even with multiple research team members collaborating with students and teachers, individual student challenges went unaddressed. Teacher priorities regarding assignment completion, and researcher priorities for data collection, distracted the research team from individual challenges that students encountered. This analysis identified that students needed opportunities to identify their positionality before beginning inquiry and consistent support throughout the process.

Ultimately, these four cases challenge student-driven IBL inquiry as the *sole* approach for teaching information credibility. Supporting student inquiry while developing student information literacy requires balancing skills instruction and student choice. Students need explicit skills instruction, repeated practice, knowledge about misinformation and online information architecture, and information-literate teachers. While blending skill-based approaches like Civic Online Reasoning (Wineburg & McGrew, 2019) with IBL is one way to support students in navigating complex information credibility environments, it requires a significant investment of instructional time and resources. Moving forward, educators must focus their attention on the impact of assumptions, information and internet architecture, and prior knowledge on students' independent inquiry—or we run the risk of providing students with more school-specific literacies that cannot address the out-of-school information they regularly navigate.

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Appendix

A. Student Inquiry Exemplar Annotations

Student	Quote	Source	Annotation
Kaitlyn	"The Artic Ocean is expected to become essentially ice free in summer before mid-century."	https://climate.nasa.gov/effects	This source surprised me because it says that the Arctic Ocean could be completely ice free before mid-century.
Elena	Food can be nostalgic and provide important connections to our family or nations. Food can be a bridge that can help immigrants find their place in a new society. Food is for being shared. Not just the food, but recipes too.	https://study.com/academy/lesson/the-connection-between-food-culture-society.html	This confirmed my thinking because I have experienced nostalgia with food before so I know some of this stuff is real.
Ben	There have been no official statements about Hong Kong from any democratic countries, except for a couple from Donald Trump	"No statements = no sources"	This shows that many countries have stayed out of the conflict; my prediction is that this is because China is a large trade factor.
Jonah	An article published in the *Review of Educational Research* reported that "in elementary school, homework had no association with achievement gains" when measured by standardized tests results or grades.	https://www.ProCon.org	This course confirms my thinking that there is no evidence to show that homework helps us in any way.

B. Single-Case Protocol Questions

1. What sorts of sources did each student identify as credible prior to the information literacy intervention?
2. What was each students' initial wondering and hopes for the project?
3. Did each students' initial wondering change over time?
4. What sources did each student rely on in the Q2 scenario activity?
5. How successful was each student on the lateral reading practice?
6. What sources did each student cite in their Q2 annotated bibliography?
    a. Did students find sources that discussed multiple sides of an issue? Did any students list unfamiliar sources?
    b. Did any students seem not to understand their sources? In annotations, did students look for sources that "challenge," "change," or "confirm" their thinking? (language from directions)
    c. What thought processes did students seem to use when writing their annotations (i.e. corroboration, synthesis, comparison)?
7. During the Q3 independent work, what parts of the Wonder Project were students working on?

8. What potential audiences did students select for their Wonder Projects?
9. What non-Internet sources of information did students use, if any?
10. What roadblocks or obstacles did this student recognize that they had encountered? What roadblocks or obstacles might this student have encountered that they did not realize?
11. On the Q3 check-in…
    a. Did the "big ideas" each student identified align with their research question? Did they have evidence to support these big ideas?
    b. Did each student identify different perspectives on their topic?
    c. Did each student identify misinformation on their topic? Was there a connection between the misinformation and their listed different perspectives? How did the student know the information was misleading?
    d. What kinds of numbers/data did each student consider important to their topic?
    e. What kind of an audience and product was each student intending on selecting?
12. Did students' research question evolve over the source of the curriculum?

C. Cross-Case Protocol Questions

1. What top-level domains did students identify as credible prior to the intervention?
2. How would students assess the credibility of a specific webpage source?
3. What factors do students use when evaluating the credibility of a webpage?
4. What were students' initial hopes for the project?
5. What were students' initial wonderings?
6. What credible sources did students cite in their annotated bibliography (AB)?
    a. What unknown sources did students cite in their AB?
    b. What non-credible sources did students cite in their AB?
    c. Did students find sources that discussed multiple sides of an issue?
    d. Did students demonstrate overall understanding of their sources through their annotations?
    e. In annotations, did students look for sources that "challenge," "change," or "confirm" their thinking?
    f. What thought processes did students seem to use when writing their annotations (i.e. corroboration, synthesis, comparison)?
    g. What non-internet sources did students use, if any?
7. Did this student recognize that they ran into any roadblocks?
8. Did this student encounter any obstacles that they didn't recognize?
9. What was the student's research question?
10. What big ideas did the student list?
11. Did the student's big ideas align with their research question?
12. Did the student have evidence to support their big ideas?
13. Did the student identify multiple perspectives on their topic?
14. Did the student identify misinformation on their topic?
15. Did the student make a connection between misinformation and their listed perspectives?
16. How did the student know the information was misleading?
17. What kinds of numbers/data did the student consider important to their topic?
18. What was the students' selected audience?
19. What was the students' intended product?

Garden of Dreams: First-generation Korean Parents' Book Club

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Abstract

Immigrant parents may have difficulty understanding their children's experiences in American schools due to language barriers and cultural differences. To support immigrant parents with children in U.S. schools, we organized a parent book club to give parents from Korea an opportunity to learn about their children's experiences and challenges. Korea is one of the least diverse countries in the world, and individuals may have little exposure to an authentic experience of racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity. In our book club project, two cohorts of participants read diverse children's books in Korean and English, discussed the concepts, and collectively created a story of/for Korean American children.

Keywords: bilingual literacy, picture books, Korean immigration

Garden of Dreams: First-generation Korean Parents' Book Club

Parents and primary caregivers are the first supporters of a child's experience with books. Parent engagement in activities such as reading and talking about books is significant for young children. When parents provide these enriching activities, children are more likely to succeed in school. Likewise, when parents are involved in children's schooling, they support children's academic development (McWayne et al., 2004). Despite the benefit of parent engagement, many barriers to parental engagement in schools exist. Immigrant parents face great challenges in understanding the U.S. school system (e.g., the meaning of the grading system), and they may have work or communication issues that prevent them from having an extensive, meaningful dialog with their children's schools (Beecher & Buzhardt, 2016).

Researchers have documented that children from immigrant families "encounter assimilative policies and practices that are premised on deficit perspectives of immigrant cultures and languages" (Lee & Walsh, 2017, p. 191). School policies focused on English language acquisition track children who are dual language learners or emergent bilinguals into English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. These instructional contexts emphasize English acquisition over rich content instruction or heritage language development, leading to the impression that children cannot be competent unless they can demonstrate their competence in English. Paris and Alim (2017) call for decentering the English language and dominant white culture in schools with the superior status it confers to some children and not others.

Many scholars (e.g., Ladson-Billing, 2009; Paris, 2012) emphasize the importance of supporting culturally and linguistically diverse students to sustain their cultures and languages. Since parents are the heritage culture provider for immigrant children, how much immigrant

children can communicate with their parents may influence their construction of cultural identities. However, the first-generation parents of immigrant youth may have difficulty accessing and understanding second-generation children's experiences in or out of U.S. schools due to language barriers and cultural differences (Luiz & White, 2017). Notably, Korean immigrant parents may have less authentic knowledge and experiences of racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity because Korea is widely considered ethnically and linguistically homogeneous (Shin, 2013). The disparity between first-generation immigrant parents and their Korean American children may complicate individual identity development among second-generation Korean Americans (Yu, 2017). Moreover, compared to other groups of people of color, there are fewer resources, narratives, and stories about and for Asians or Asian Americans in the United States (Rodriguez & Kim, 2018).

Culturally Sustaining Literacy Practice

Children's books may provide a unique lens to understand an individual's experience. Authors with diverse backgrounds can express their memories of "assimilation and alienation" in these stories (Yi, 2014, p.131). These stories can be a bridge to enable immigrant parents to see how the stories of their Korean American children are a part of the American experience. In other words, children of Korean parents experience a very different school environment than they might have had in Korea. Their parents may not be well equipped to address the cultural differences and additional identity development that second-generation children experience. Through reading stories about diversity and reading culturally specific literature, families may recognize their similarities to other groups in American society, feel the affirmation of their unique identity, and sustain their culture (Yi, 2014).

At the same time, if families feel empowered to share their stories, culture, and language, the deficit perspective of non-English families may be disrupted. Schools can support literacy development for children from families for whom English is not the first language through culturally sustaining family literacy program practices. Drawing from culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012), culturally sustaining practices allow, invite, and encourage families to share their cultural traditions from home in school and maintain them throughout their child's schooling.

Family Literacy Programs

Ochoa and Quiroa (2020) note that Family Literacy programs should provide families with educational resources about reading with their children to support them academically. At the same time, Family Literacy programs should value and respect the families' native language and culture. Further, researchers recommend that families' cultural background knowledge and heritage language(s) should be included in the programming, communication, resource materials, and books (Friedrich et al., 2014; McNair, 2013). Research shows that teaching children to read in their first language also promotes higher reading achievement levels in English (Goldenberg & Coleman, 2010).

One type of family literacy program is the book club. Book clubs are informal gatherings that bring together a community of readers who discuss and interact around shared literacy experiences. To bring a theoretical framework to the family literacy book club, the lens of culturally sustaining pedagogy (referenced above; Ladson-Billing, 2009; Paris, 2012) and Brooks and Browne's (2012) culturally situated reader-response theory can be a starting point. Culturally situated reader response identifies the ways readers bring their ethnic identity, family background, community, and peer interactions to the reading tasks.

Purpose and Objectives

To address the need of immigrant parents to understand their children's experiences and to support their voice and agency in being their children's first teachers, we developed a book club specifically for Korean parents who were immigrants with Korean American children. The participants read children's books about diversity in Korean and then read books about the Korean American experience in English. They attended book discussion meetings about diversity in the U.S., reading interactively with their children, and schooling practices. Parents were instructed on using dialogic reading techniques (Whitehurst, 1992), which involve children in the reading process as active listeners and responders. Instead of reading a book cover to cover without stopping, parents are coached to pause to ask questions, make observations, and invite children to participate. Research demonstrated using this active form of reading increased preschoolers' language learning, which led to better kindergarten readiness (National Early Literacy Panel, 2008). However, this approach works for older children too. Then, each group collectively created a story of/for Korean American children with affirming messages centered on their experiences. The completed books were published as Creative Commons digital publications (see appendix B).

This project was a community-based participatory study that differs from traditional study designs in that it facilitates a more collaborative, equitable partnership in all phases of research, involving an empowering and power-sharing process that attends to social inequalities. University researchers, one Korean professor of mathematics education whose research is about multilingual learners and one a professor with expertise in community literacy, worked together on a small grant to fund the project. This allowed a graduate student in Applied Linguistics, who was also a native Korean, to join the team.

The study questions were not specific; rather, we wished to explore the intersection of parent literacy programs and Korean immigrants' cultural experiences in American schools. This research approach also fosters co-learning among all partners and strives for a balance between knowledge generation and intervention for the mutual benefit of all partners.

Methods

Participants and Setting

The program was conducted twice, with the first cohort held in person with six participating families. Cohort two was held over Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and there were five participating families. Each participant identified as a Korean immigrant to the United States with a child under eight who attended formal school or daycare. Children ranged in age from six months to eight years. Participants were recruited from an after-school Korean language school, a community organization that offered classes for children in the Korean language. Sessions were conducted in Korean, and the graduate student provided translation as needed when non-Korean guest speakers attended the meetings. All meetings were recorded.

Procedures and Materials

In preparation for the program, project leaders met to select books, gather instructional resources on dialogic reading, and determine a program schedule of topics. Potential participants gave input on topics of interest, date and time selection, and the amount of commitment required. Meetings included informational material, interactive reading instruction and discussion, and discussion of books and content. Participants completed an evaluation survey at the beginning and the end of the program. The beginning survey included questions about how the parents have read books with their children and what experiences they or their children had related to their racial identity. The survey included questions about what parents learned about their children and

reflection questions about the book club and curriculum process. The survey questions were given in Korean and English, and the participating parents could choose Korean or English to respond to the survey questions. The graduate student translated the parents' responses to survey questions into English.

Book Selection

First, we chose Korean language books containing content about diversity (because no Korean books published in South Korea are about Korean Americans). Then, we selected English books about Korean Americans, so parents could discuss the context that their children experienced (see appendix A). Authentic book selections are essential, and recommendations from experts (Rodriguez & Kim, 2018) were followed (see suggestions for book clubs at the end of the article). All participants received a free copy of each book.

Instructional Materials

Participants received handouts on the dialogic reading method and general reading tips. These were provided in Korean and English if requested. At each meeting, informative content was delivered with a PowerPoint. Parents were encouraged to use the dialogic reading method with their children and read the book before the next meeting.

Story creation

Participants were informed that they would be co-creating a children's book with their group. The lead facilitator led the group in brainstorming ideas for topics or themes. Once the theme was determined, each family contributed a part of the story based on their child and family. For example, in Garden of Dreams, the theme was the family's dream for the child versus the child's dream for themselves. In Even Better, the theme was differences between home and school that the child had noticed, along with the idea that children may be using or

switching between home and school cultures. For both books, a Korean illustrator was hired to provide professional illustrations using funds from the grant. The books were then formatted using Adobe InDesign and printed on LuLu.com. The publishing website provides a design template for arranging the text and illustrations for the book.

Data analysis strategy

At the end of the program, participants completed an evaluation survey (see Appendix). The survey asked questions about what parents learned about their children and reflection questions about the book club and curriculum process. The graduate student translated the parents' responses to survey questions. Each meeting was recorded, and the graduate students kept notes on relevant parent comments for each session. Researchers used exploratory qualitative methods to analyze survey responses and parent comments collected during sessions. The data analysis approach involved planning and organizing the data in a meaningful way. The research team utilized an approach favored by content analysis techniques with multiple passes at the data (Bengtsson, 2016) and using thematic coding. Because the content of the workshop and the questions were specific, we began coding with expected, common themes. The researchers did thematic coding in the first round by assigning predetermined codes (e.g., "model minority", "racism", "integration", "translanguaging") to each survey answer. Then the investigators each coded separately and compared codes. Where one or two responses differed, the consensus was reached through discussion. For example, the team discussed changing "integration" to "assimilation". To assure accuracy and quality, all participants were asked if there was anything to add, anything to take away, and to evaluate if the cleaned data accurately reflects their previously stated opinions.

Findings

We found some themes that occurred across both groups. Unsurprisingly, given the workshop topics of diversity and the first- and second-generation immigrant experience, and the nature of the questions asked, themes included racism, assimilation, and connecting to literacy. Parents were also asked how we could improve the book club, and some offered concrete suggestions.

Racism

Several moments in the meeting discussions and answers on the surveys revolved around the participating parents growing to understand racism. They may not have initially labeled their experience as racism but knew it was an uncomfortable interaction. For example, one parent shared her daughter's teacher continued to mispronounce her daughter's Korean name and asked her to choose an American name because the Korean name was hard to pronounce. Due to this experience, the parent decided to initiate a legal process of changing her daughter's legal name to a common English name. Another parent shared a story that her son's elementary teacher asked her son to use only English, not only during class time but also during recess time. Before our discussions, the parents did not connect these experiences to racism.

Assimilation

Each participant shared some experience about trying to fit into American life while continuing their Korean culture and routines. Several parents gave examples of times when their child expressed a wish not to appear different. They wanted to fit in with American hairstyle, clothes, toys, and even lunch foods. As one parent shared, "When my first one was at kindergarten, she said she wanted to be blond because of her different appearance. She said, because of the difference, her friends didn't want to play with her, so she wanted to be normal." Many of the parents encouraged their children to explain or talk about their Korean culture. As

one mom said, “many times, those people simply do not know better. I always tell my kids to teach and talk to their friends about our culture and the differences, so friends are aware.”

Connections to Literacy

All parents stated that they enjoyed reading the books with their children. As one parent said, “I enjoyed reading the books to my children and having the opportunity to talk to them about different topics related to being "different" living in the US as a Korean American.”. Parents also appreciated learning how to read interactively. Many knew reading was essential but did not know that asking questions and interacting during reading is good practice.

Suggestions for Improvement

Suggestions for improvement also included having more clear roles and responsibilities for the book club members and more age-specific recommendations for reading and talking with children. While some felt the discussion was beneficial, at least one parent felt that the structure inhibited discussion. Interestingly, this parent connected her idea to Korean culture, saying, “It would be beneficial for the participants to freely discuss and lead the book club rather than have a project leader and others included as semi-facilitators. With somewhat of a hierarchy (as this is a huge thing in Korean culture), I felt it was difficult at times to open up and discuss freely among moms.” Some parents expressed a wish for more time to write the storybook together or more understanding of the writing and publishing process.

Discussion

Public schools in the U.S. continue to see enrollment growth of immigrant and migrant families. Engaging with families while supporting academic goals such as reading is a way to increase success for children in school. Book clubs can offer a vehicle to connect and engage with families. In our book club project with Korean American families, all aspects of the

Culturally situated reader response framework (Brooks & Brown, 2012), including ethnic identity, family background, community, and peer interactions of their children, were brought out by the reading tasks and discussion. The children's books created a bridge for parents to discuss their own experiences and their child's experiences with their peers.

While reading and discussing the books was enjoyable, some families wished to have a more structured role or more time to work on their stories. Writing and publishing a children's story was a new experience for the project leaders and parents. Finding a simple theme the group could agree on helped write a cohesive story. Parents wrote in Korean, and the graduate student did English translations. However, as Paris and Alim (2017) suggest, placing the Korean first and the English second was a deliberate choice to decenter the primacy of English.

Recommendations for Starting a Book Club

Start with books written or translated into the parents' native language. This helps to reduce the English anxiety that the parents might have). If there is a specific myth or misconception of a cultural group, avoid the books that may reinforce the misconception. For example, we tried to avoid choosing all books that described Korean Americans as immigrants or language learners. Be aware of illustrations. Even though the story is authentic, the images could be distorted. We found that some Korean-authored books have authentic stories, but the pictures do not correctly show Korean culture or exaggerated illustrations. Examples could be how buildings are drawn, or facial features are depicted. Publishers often choose illustrators, and authors do not have a say in the illustrations. Note a detailed program guide is available by contacting the authors.

Although we paid artists to illustrate the books, volunteers may be found, or the families and children could provide their own illustrations. A high school student illustrated our second

book. The important thing is to have an illustrator with the same background or deep understanding of the culture, as this is often missing in publishing.

Conclusion

The experiences parents shared of racism and assimilation are not unusual. Parents may feel uncomfortable or not strongly connected to schools, and our participants had not communicated their experiences with anyone at the school. And yet, parent engagement is a critical ingredient in a child's school success. Schools may want to consider building relationships with immigrant families and using parent literacy programs gives extra benefit to literacy development. We had parents with very young children who participated in the group. They were already thinking about their child's future concerning attending school. How powerful would it be for schools to connect with parents while their children are young to say, "We want to know your story."

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Appendix A

Book selections

Korean Books	Author	Link for purchase
Walk with Me (집으로 가는 길)	Jairo Buitrago	Walk with Me
Who's Next Door? (이웃이 생겼어요!)	Mayuko Kishira	Who's Next Door?
The Snowy Day (눈 오는 날)	Ezra Jack Keats	The Snowy Day
The Colors of Us (살색은 다 달라요)	Karen Katz	The Colors of Us
English Books		
Here I am	Patti Kim	Here I am
Dear Juno	Soyung Pak	Dear Juno
The Day You Begin	Jacqueline Woodson	The Day You Begin
Chef Roy Choi and the Street Food Remix	Jacqueline Briggs Martin & June Jo Lee	Chef Roy Choi and the Street Food Remix

Appendix B
Book Club Preparation List

Preparation tasks (weeks 1-4)

- Book selection and purchase (4 books per cohort)
- Prepare a curriculum and material (handout of interactive dialogue, PEER form). The Iowa Reading Research Center has translated the dialogic reading handout into several languages here: Dialogic Reading: Having a Conversation about Books
- Recruit participants for Cohort 1 (5-7 people)
- Schedule the book club meeting time by discussing with the participants

Weeks 4-8 (8 meetings)

Organize and run book club meetings (weekly or bi-weekly)

• Meeting 1: orientation, lecture about interactive reading and cultural identity

• Meetings 2~5: book reading and discussion2

• Meetings 6~8: collective story creation and preparation for a book publication.

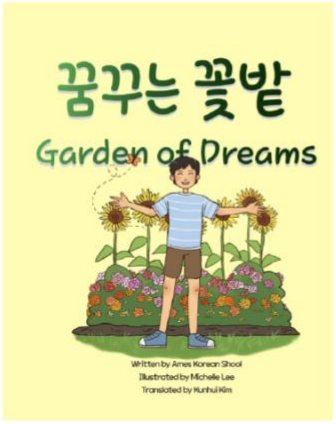
• After all meetings: reflection survey

Conclusion of book club

- Request story illustrations (if needed or wanted)
- Revise and refine stories
- Complete any edits
- Publish the collectively created story as a book

Appendix C

Books Created by Parents

	
Cohort 1 Book: 꿈꾸는 꽃밭 Garden of Dreams Download at https://www.iastatedigitalpress.com/plugins/books/14/	Cohort 2 Book: 그래서 더 좋은 것 같아 Even Better Download at https://www.iastatedigitalpress.com/plugins/books/62/

https://www.iastatedigitalpress.com/plugins/books/14/

https://www.iastatedigitalpress.com/plugins/books/62/

Appendix D
Surveys and Forms

Registration Form

1. Detailed information: frequency and duration of meetings, place, participation fee, eligibility, benefits, and the maximum number of participants.
    - 언제: 2020년 2월부터 5월 (총 8번 미팅, 1 모임은 90분에서 2시간 소요)
    - 어디서: 추후 공지
    - 참가비: 없음
    - 자격 조건: 만 18세 이하의 한국계 미국인 자녀를 둔 한국인 부모 (모든 모임이 한국어로 진행됩니다)
    - 혜택: 무료 동화책, 아이와 함께 독서하는 방법에 대한 정보, 동화책 창작 기회
    - 참가 명수: 한 학기 북클럽 인원은 7명으로 제한합니다.
2. Name in the native language 한글 이름
3. Name in English 영어 이름
4. Email 이메일 주소
5. Phone number 전화 번호
6. Mailing address 주소
7. Age of each child 어느 연령의 자녀를 몇 명 두고 계신가요?
8. The reason why you wish to apply for this book club 북클럽에 지원하는 이유를 설명해 주세요.
9. Your available time 만약 북클럽에 참여하게 된다면 모임에 참여가능한 시간대를 선택해주세요.

Evaluation Survey

Name 이름이 무엇입니까?

1. How old is/are your child/children? What grade is he/she, or are they in? 자녀의 나이와 학년이 어떻게 됩니까?
2. Why did you join this book club? 이 학부모 북클럽에 참여하게 된 이유가

무엇입니까?

3. Please describe how you read a book with your child (e.g., how long, how often, in what setting)? 보통 어떤 식으로 아이와 함께 책을 읽어오셨는지 설명해주세요. 예를 들어, 얼마나 자주, 얼마나 오랫

4. Please describe your experience that you heard from or discussed with your child about their experiences regarding cultural/language differences at school or social life? 아이가 학교나 집밖에서 다른 문화와 언어에 관련해 겪은 일들을 아이에게 들으시거나 함께 이야기해본 적이 있으신가요? 자세히 설명해주세요.

5. Please describe how you discuss with or guide your child when they encounter difficulty because of the cultural/language differences. 문화적 언어적 차이때문에 아이가 어려움을 겪었을 때 어떻게 지도하고 이야기해주셨는지 설명해주세요.

6. Please describe what you enjoyed/learned through this book club participation.이 학부모 북클럽에 참여함으로써 배운 점이나, 특별히 즐겁게 참여할 수 있었던 부분이 있다면 말씀해주십시오.

7. Please describe anything you felt unsatisfied or uncomfortable through this book club participation.이 학부모 북클럽 참여와 관련하여 만족스럽지 못했거나, 약간 불편하게 느껴졌던 부분이 있다면 말씀해주십시오.

8. Please make any suggestions/recommendations that you want to give for future participants to have a meaningful experience from this book club. 차후의 학부모 북클럽에서 더욱 의미있는 경험을 함께 나누기 위하여 제안/추천할 사항이 있다면 간략히 말씀해주십시오.

9. Please make any suggestions/recommendations that you want to make for the book club management team to improve this book club. 이 학부모 북클럽의 개선과 발전을 위하여 운영진에 제안/추천할 사항이 있다면 간략히 말씀해주십시오.

Developing Preservice Teachers' Cultural Responsiveness through Culturally Authentic Text

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Abstract

This manuscript focuses on a literature circles assignment implemented within a course focused on culturally and linguistically responsive teaching. The assignment was born from a desire to help preservice teachers (PSTs) recognize how to use adolescent texts to support culturally responsive teaching and social justice education in their future classrooms. PSTs selected adolescent literature featuring main characters from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and formed literature circles based on that selection. Through reading and reflection, PSTs engaged in critical self-examination of their biases, values, and assumptions that impact interactions with culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Keywords: Literature circles, diverse literature, culturally responsive, preservice teachers

Developing Preservice Teachers' Cultural Responsiveness through Culturally Authentic Text

As classrooms across the nation become more culturally and racially diverse, preservice teachers (PSTs) are tasked with examining their own beliefs and understandings of working with diverse student populations. Their own values, biases, and practices influence their ability to effectively work with students in the classrooms in which they will one day be placed (Jackson, 1995). Increased exposure to information and strategies supporting culturally responsive teaching is needed in teacher education programs (Gay, 2018; Mosley Wetzel et al., 2019). PSTs' experiences working with diverse students must go beyond information found in a textbook. It is essential for teacher educators to find additional and impactful opportunities for PSTs to engage in reflection and discourse on cultural responsiveness. One-way programs can do this is through children's and adolescent literature.

Renewed calls for teaching that disrupts ideas of education, power, and privilege served as the impetus for the study. In her famous TED talk (2009), author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie said, "Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity" (17:35). This orientation to literature frames the study described herein; that literature can be windows and doors that allow people to read themselves into their own cultures and cultures of others; that readers see beyond the single stories that are too often amplified; to challenge readers to see the danger of a single story in the texts around them (Alsup, 2015; Sims Bishop, 1990; Ivey & Johnston, 2017).

When utilized strategically, children's and adolescent literature can provide students with vivid snapshots of current and historical social issues (Botelho & Rudman, 2010; Mathis, 2020).

Gee (2017) advocates for stories as "important means for extending real-world experiences," as they are types of "vicarious experiences" (p. 38) where readers can find their perspectives on the world expanded. Using stories as an entry point for understanding the experiences of others is particularly important for social issues. Literature that focuses on or highlights social issues can benefit students by creating space for critical dialogue and exchanging ideas, allowing students to explore, take mental and emotional risks, empathize with others, and unpack the roles of power and privilege in society and their own lives (Alsup, 2015).

This article discusses how one instructor, Annemarie, exposed PSTs to the lives of diverse students through culturally authentic adolescent texts. PSTs participate in literature circles to engage in reflection and discourse on the literature and revelations about working with diverse student populations.

Background

PSTs enrolled at a medium-size university in central New York must take a course titled Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners. By the end of the semester, PSTs are expected to understand theories related to culturally and linguistically responsive teaching practices, emphasizing students labeled as English language learners (ELLs) to implement literacy-based activities. The literacy activities they design must promote an inclusive classroom community and demonstrate critical self-examination of their biases, values, and assumptions that impact interactions with culturally and linguistically diverse learners (Lewison et al., 2015). Much of the literature on developing socio-critical perspectives focus on primary and secondary schooling. Creating opportunities to develop the skills and dispositions described above is just as crucial for future K-12 educators. Recent position statements put forward by major literacy organizations have called for a greater focus on culturally sustaining teaching practices (e.g., LRA, 2016;

NCTE, 2018). Such practices are founded on sociocultural perspectives, which posit that learning is influenced by cultural and historical ways of knowing and doing (Vygotsky, 1980). Thus, understanding, accepting, and affirming students' cultural backgrounds and examining their own is an important first step for educators' praxis. To that end, Brown calls for teacher educators to prepare teachers with "humanizing critical sociocultural knowledge" (2013, p. 331), or teachers who can flexibly draw on students' cultural and historical ways of knowing and doing and their resources to interrogate and disrupt dominant and deficit discourses. A recent review of research about pre-service teachers' critical sociocultural knowledge development outlines the urgent necessity of this work (Mosley Wetzel et al., 2019).

Across this scholarship, the authors (Mosley Wetzel et al., 2019) identified multicultural literature as an effective tool for examining one's identity, discovering connections between oneself and characters from historically marginalized groups, and approaching differences with empathy. Bringing together research on multicultural literature and sociocultural teaching and learning, this study explores the efficacy of a small-group literature circles assignment using a self-selected adolescent text. PSTs read selected adolescent texts explicitly chosen based on their representation of the cultural authenticity of the main characters. Shared literature readings help establish and enhance classroom community by recognizing and respecting individual differences (Sanchez, 2008; Kent & Simpson, 2020).

Having PSTs read these texts through the literature circle structure allows them to engage in unstructured and earnest conversations about a text. This creates a space where PSTs can process and internalize new information based on their peers' discussions with them (Lloyd, 2004; Montoya, 2006). According to King and Simpson (2020), "allowing students time to discuss, analyze, and reflect on the reading in small groups or pairs, and/or to create responses to

the literature with a partner or group, is a great way to facilitate community" (p. 147). Literature circles can help students feel connected to, valued, and influenced by their peers and teacher, thereby making them more comfortable engaging with critical sociocultural content and reflexivity about their praxis. This opportunity for discussion and simply talking about the text is the central path used in literature circles (Fountas & Pinnell, 1994).

Teachers are increasingly encouraged to engage with their students about current sociocultural issues, such as racism, violence, and poverty (Falter & Kerkhoff, 2018; Johnson & Neville, 2019). To confidently and thoughtfully engage in such work, PSTs first must develop their own sociocultural knowledge. Culturally authentic literature with critical themes has been shown as an effective approach to expanding PSTs' sociocultural knowledge (McNair, 2003; Schieble, 2011). While participation in these circles aimed to meet several goals, this study examines PST's overall reactions to the literature and what they took away from the experience.

Methods

Research Design

This study utilized design-based research (Barab & Squire, 2009; Sandoval & Bell, 2004) to understand the results of a literature circle assignment. Implementation of literature circles within this course is two-fold: (1) to teach PSTs the benefits of using literature circles with linguistically diverse students in their classrooms, and (2) to expose them to culturally authentic texts and stories about diverse school-aged children. Design-based research intends to examine the relationship between the theoretical underpinnings of a learning design and its efficacy in promoting student learning (Reinking & Bradley, 2008). This orientation to our research compels us to bring our theoretical knowledge and practice into conversation with one another to develop the best design to support our PSTs.

Researcher Positionalities

As White, cishet, able, middle class, English-speaking, United States citizens, we acknowledge the many privileged social positions we hold and the significant unearned privilege we harbor in our professional spaces and beyond. We are committed to ongoing reflection and knowledge-seeking about power, privilege, and oppression within ourselves and the cultural, social, and educational systems in which we participate. We believe in the power of literature as one such way to support our PSTs in learning about power, privilege, and oppression. This study developed from our wonderings if exposure to diverse literature through a prominently discussion-based format may also help PSTs recognize their place within society.

Participants

PSTs enrolled in the course during the fall semester of 2021 were invited to participate in this study. They were required to engage in the literature circle regardless, but we sought consent to collect their data; 50 consented across two course sections. About 85% of the participants were White and female-identifying in both courses. The remaining participants identified as Hispanic or Other. Until their enrollment in this course, *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners*, the PSTs have had minimal experiences within the elementary school setting. Most complete previous field hours in daycare centers and elementary schools with predominantly White student bodies. Their enrollment in this course ensures about sixty field hours in a nearby school district that serves a more significant number of culturally and linguistically diverse students. This allows them to connect course assignments and discussions with elementary students they are engaging with.

Literature Circles

Before beginning this assignment, PSTs were tasked with reading an excerpt from Montoya's (2006) piece *Using Literature Circles to Improve Literacy Skills of English Language Learners* as part of their course on culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Through this reading, they garner what literature circles were, the different types that exist, what student participation looks like within each type, and how to implement them in the classroom. PSTs learned that "literature circles are small classroom-based student reading and discussion groups… Discussion is often guided by response to what students have read" (Montoya, 2006, p. 22). These discussions often focus on characters, events, the author's craft, and personal experiences. Literature circles provide students with a way to deeper understand what they have read through structured discussion and extended written responses (Montoya, 2006). It is through literature circles that teachers can develop passionate and enthusiastic readers. One of our goals was to encourage our PSTs to build their own passion and understanding for reading diverse texts through this shared reading experience.

Students in the course participated in a basic literature circle (King, 2001). Books were chosen, and reading groups were formed based on personal preference. Reading groups comprised about 3-4 members resulting in about 4-5 different texts being read in one class section. PSTs met four times over four weeks for their literature circle meetings. The first meeting was an introductory meeting where they identified how their specific book could be split across three meetings. They were required to read one-third of their book for each remaining meeting, slowly progressing through the text. To keep discussions organic and natural, the participants were only required to bring two sincere questions to each remaining literature circle meeting. These were posited as questions they have as readers of the book, rather than "teachery" questions. They could jot down natural wonderings about characters, predictions of

what may happen next, or even jot down true feelings about the story as it progressed and/or characters. It was important that they engage in discussion around the book in a book-club fashion, rather than gauging their reactions from the teacher's point of view.

The Adolescent Novels

The books the PSTs selected were an essential component of this assignment. With discussions in class focusing on culturally and linguistically diverse learners, they needed to choose texts that reflect the students they will one day work with. According to Hollie (2018), "supplementing mainstream text with culturally responsive resources hinges completely on the selection process" (p. 145). With an increased representation of culturally diverse characters in books and more resources and book lists becoming available, it is important to remember that not all books featuring Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) are created equal. The PSTs were presented with a list curated by Hollie (2018) and vetted by the course instructor. While PSTs in the course will be certified to teach Birth – to sixth grade, it was important for them to have access to books that they could read more in-depth over four weeks.

For this reason, the text list presented features adolescent texts that could be read from grades three through six rather than picture books. This list provides them with several culturally authentic *adolescent* texts. Culturally authentic texts illuminate the genuine cultural experiences of a specific cultural group. Within a culturally authentic text, one cultural group cannot be swapped for another without jeopardizing the story's integrity and the experiences within (Hollie, 2018). Table 1 lists the text selections featured in this study.

Table 1. Adolescent Texts Selected by Participants

Adolescent Text	**Summary** (sourced from Amazon.com)	**Themes**

Kinda Like Brothers by Coe Booth (2014)	Everyone thinks Jarrett and Kevon should be friends -- but that's not gonna happen. Not when Kevon's acting like he's better than Jarrett -- and not when Jarrett finds out Kevon's keeping some major secrets. Jarrett doesn't think it's fair that he has to share his room, his friends, and his life with some stranger. He's gotta do something about it -- but what?	Foster families, peer rivalries, urban life, special needs children
The Skin I'm In by Sharon G. Flake (1998)	Maleeka suffers every day from the other kids' taunts in her class. If they're not getting at her about her homemade clothes or her good grades, it's about her dark, black skin. When a new teacher, whose face is blotched with a startling white patch, starts at their school, Maleeka can see that there is bound to be trouble for her. But the new teacher's attitude surprises Maleeka. Miss Saunders loves the skin she's in. Can Maleeka learn to do the same?	Identity/self-acceptance, cultural identity, bullying, fitting in, family conflict, friendship, colorism

The Crossover by Kwame Alexander (2014)	Josh and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood, he's got mad beats, too, that tell his family's story in verse, in this fast and furious middle-grade novel of family and brotherhood from Kwame Alexander. Josh and Jordan must come to grips with growing up on and off the court to realize breaking the rules comes at a terrible price, as their story's heart-stopping climax proves a game-changer for the entire family.	Sports, family, loss, change, Black teen experience, coming of age
Inside Out & Back Again by Thanhha Lai (2011)	Hà has only ever known Saigon: the thrills of its markets, the joy of its traditions, and the warmth of her friends close by. But now, the Vietnam War has reached her home. Hà and her family are forced to flee as Saigon falls, and they board a ship headed toward hope—toward America.	Immigration, refugees, war, coming of age

Amina's Voice by Hena Khan (2017)	Amina has never been comfortable in the spotlight. She is happy just hanging out with her best friend, Soojin. Except now that she's in middle school, everything feels different. Soojin is suddenly hanging out with Emily, one of the "cool" girls in the class, and even talking about changing her name to something more "American." Does Amina need to start changing too? Or hiding who she is to fit in? While Amina grapples with these questions, she is devastated when her local mosque is vandalized.	Self-acceptance, Islamic practices/life, identity, cultural differences, overcoming tragedy/bias
The Red Pencil by Andrea Davis Pinkney (2015)	In Amira's peaceful Sudanese village, life is shattered when Janjaweed attackers arrive, unleashing unspeakable horrors. After losing nearly everything, Amira needs to find the strength to make the long journey on foot to safety at a refugee camp. She begins to lose hope, until	Refugee life, living through war/violence, change, loss, having hope

	the gift of a simple red pencil opens her mind and possibilities.	

Data Sources and Analysis

Artifacts collected included (1) questions recorded and brought to class to lead discussions for literature circle meetings and (2) individual written reflections discussing PST's growth about culturally responsive teaching and social justice education. We employed content analysis (White & Marsh, 2006) to examine the data, using pre-established themes pertinent to learning outcomes to code for cultural awareness (e.g., discussion of themes) and connections that participants made from their own experiences to those of the characters in the novels. This guided our analysis of each literature circle and across the circles. We found the reflections to be the best examples of their conclusive understanding during the analysis. Thus, we present data only from the individual written reflections as exemplars of learning outcomes for this article.

Findings & Discussion

Upon completion, the book participants were asked to reflect on the book and provide a written response. PSTs shared their revelations and connections in their responses as they were asked to reflect on and discuss the following questions:

1. How has this book impacted your knowledge of culturally and linguistically diverse students?
2. How has the reading of this book impacted your own cultural awareness?
3. How could you use this book in your future classroom?

We gauged participants' perceived cultural awareness about the book and their understanding of working with diverse student populations through these questions. Findings coalesced around the three questions posed to participants: how reading about the experiences of diverse youth

generated empathy, understanding of the human experience, and possible classroom applications. Quotes pulled from their reflections are included below.

Characters as Empathy Generators

Participants reported multiple ways in which reading and discussing the adolescent novels supported their understanding of the lived experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Interestingly, the coded statements related to the lived experiences of diverse youths frequently alluded to the empathy that participants developed during the reading. For example, one participant discussed the relationship between police and Black boys while responding to *Kinda Like Brothers* (Booth, 2015), sharing,

> Speaking on this topic is important because it is something that sadly does occur in the world today. Simply because of their skin color, many African American males are stopped by the police just because of the way they look. Many children attending school struggle with the work and feel they are not smart enough and/or not good enough to succeed… It is important for each and every student to feel safe, comfortable, confident, and determined when it comes to their education. This book has opened my mind to a wider observation of what my students' lives could consist of. It is important as an educator to be there for your students and support them through this journey through their education

Another participant discussed colorism in their reaction to *The Skin I'm In* (Flake, 1998). Merriam-Webster (n.d.) defines colorism as "prejudice or discrimination especially within a racial or ethnic group favoring people with lighter skin over those with darker skin." The PST recognized this treatment of the main character and wrote,

> The author was able to pull emotions from me to sympathize with Maleeka through her writing. Even though I have never struggled with my racial identity, I was able to understand a small part of the negative feelings associated with it from the reading… It can also help all students see and feel the impacts of racism. This book can promote a positive discussion of skin tone, which is often a sensitive topic. This book and books similar are great for helping the movement to educate all students on the intersecting oppressions of race and gender.

Yet another participant discussed the challenges that newcomer children and families face in *Amina's Voice* (Khan, 2017), stating,

> ...this book has opened my eyes to the world our students may be facing outside of the classroom. Things such as your family trying to gain citizenship is a very legitimate situation I may face as a future teacher and one I need to be aware of. To have empathy with our students and understanding that homework is most definitely not the most important thing on their plate in those times.

There is a persistent belief, though challenging to quantify, that literature strengthens readers' capacity for empathy (Alsup, 2015; Ames, 2013; Kidd & Castano, 2013; Sims Sims Bishop 1990; Vaughn et al., 2015). As Ivey and Johnston (2013) put it, reading "offers the possibility of expanding the capacity for social imagination in the reader's own life, potentially changing readers' social behavior" (p. 257). For some students, it seemed that the power of the literature circles related to the access that the novels gave them to diverse youths' experiences. The empathy it engendered was essential to their growing cultural awareness.

Universality of Human Experience

To a lesser degree, PSTs demonstrated some insight into themselves as cultural beings, often through how they were and could not connect to characters in the stories. For example, one PST shared her connections to Maleeka from *The Skin I'm In* (Flake, 1998):

> I slowly started to relate to Maleeka because I felt similar insecurities and doubtful feelings when I was her age. Even though I'm a white woman, I also had the overthinking beliefs that I wasn't beautiful enough or capable to be seen 'correctly' by everyone else in school.

Another PST made a similar comparison about experiences had by those from different racial backgrounds when reading Pinkney's (2017) *The Red Pencil.* The main character's mother warns her of a militia group that will often attack without warning in the story. The character is told that she must run if she ever feels in danger. The PST connected this experience of the Sudanese character with children of color in the United States:

> It reminded me of how in the United States most families of color have a similar conversation with their children about the police. How to always show your hands when talking to officers, be polite even if they are disrespecting you, do as they say, and much more. As a white [*sic*]female I never experienced conversations like these with my parents because I didn't have to.

Two other PSTs made similar connections between the characters in *Inside Out & Back Again* (Lai, 2011) and their own ethnic and cultural backgrounds. One wrote, "I had a connection to this book due to my parents and relatives enduring the same experience [as refugees], so I wanted to know more about Lai and her family's experiences." The other shared,

> My father is from Laos and also came to America when he was younger and had to adjust to an entirely new life. Kim and her struggles remind me of my father's struggles when

> he came to America. Stories like this help put into perspective the hardships immigrants went through.

As participants like those quoted above examined themselves and their experiences, they discovered that they were not so different from the diverse youth featured in their novels. In drawing parallels between themselves and the characters, participants touched on the universality of human experience (Glenn, 2012). This exercise seemed to humanize youths with historically othered identities for participants (Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía, 2003; Vaughn et al., 2015). However, this approach has an inherent risk in that PSTs may conclude that differences do not ultimately matter (e.g., race-evasive approaches) and fail to recognize the impact of marginalized social identities on students' day-to-day lives (Glenn, 2012).

Classroom Applications

In addition to gaining insight into their cultural awareness through the selected adolescent texts, participants brainstormed how they might use them in their classrooms. Broadly, participants identified various ways to utilize the books for classroom discussions. They discussed how books like *The Skin I'm In* (Flake, 1998) and *Amina's Voice* (Khan, 2017) could be used to address themes of bullying, acceptance, and the power in one's voice. They recognized that their future students could also feel the empathy they were feeling for the characters in the books. One wrote,

> *The Skin I'm In* is a great book to read to future students to teach about the messages of self-love and acceptance, while also introducing the topics of bullying and colorism which is very important to bring up to children who may see this in their school. Not only were the messages strong throughout the whole book, but we also saw a lot of character

> development and we were able to ask questions about the characters and find hidden clues in the writing to convey the character's feelings.

Another stated,

> In my future classroom, I can use [*Amina's Voice*] when the students are transitioning from elementary school to middle school... I can use this book if students are struggling with feeling accepted. I can use this book to show my students that their voice is a powerful weapon and it should be used to bring people together.

However, only one participant connected the text to potential content area learning goals, highlighting the writing structure of *The Crossover* (Alexander, 2014) and how that could be utilized as a model for writing activities in the classroom:

> ... there are many ways I would authentically and meaningfully implement this book into my classroom. One use of this book is to support teaching about different styles of writing such as poetry and verse. The author deliberately chose to use this style of writing to embody the identity of Josh, who expresses himself through poetic rhymes. For me, this reinforced how not all students express themselves in the same ways.

Helping PSTs to envision their future agency is always the ultimate goal of teacher education, whether it is in addressing social justice issues (Dávila & Barnes, 2017; Hill, 2012; Staley & Leonardi, 2016) or better teaching the lived experiences of their future students (Mendoza, 2018; Sugimoto et al., 2017), or aligning diverse texts with content area goals (Purdum-Cassidy & Scott, 2020). PSTs often struggle to weave diversity and social justice issues into mandated curricula (Adams & Kaczmarczyk, under review; Sugimoto et al., 2017). More explicit instruction and scaffolding to support the synthesis of competing objectives are needed.

Limitations

While many PSTs shared insightful reflections, a small few provided very minor connections or struggled to see how to incorporate the book into their future elementary classroom. For example, a participant mentioned the idea of using one of the books in their classroom but did not connect the idea to an explicit lesson or theme, saying, "I could use this as a read-aloud to tie into another lesson, maybe even a lesson about culture. I could also have this as an option in the classroom library for students to read on their own time." Another simply stated that *Inside Out & Back Again* (Lai, 2011) "showed me to not stereotype and be biased...students who are learning English deserve time, patience and acceptance." Such vague and even deficit-oriented responses remind us that this instructional practice requires some buy-in from students. Sociocultural perspectives cannot manifest simply because we compel them to; students must have some sort of choice in the matter (Adams, 2020; Glenn & Ginsberg, 2016; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001; Ivey & Johnston, 2013; Stover & Bach, 2011).

Conclusion

Undergraduate education courses commonly engage PSTs in readings from textbooks, peer-reviewed journals, and additional theory-based materials. Feedback from PSTs after this assignment supported the focus on pedagogy and application within their course readings and assignments across their degree program. If they are ever tasked with selecting children's literature, it is with the expectation that they use this text to create a lesson reflecting instructional practices they are learning in their course(s). Several PSTs expressed their initial trepidation upon learning they would be reading adolescent literature, but that trepidation turned to excitement during the first literature circle meeting. PSTs shared their inferences with one another, shock and/or anger towards characters, connections to characters, and expressed their eagerness to continue reading.

These earnest reactions to literature highlight the value in exposing PSTs to culturally authentic literature that they may one day share with their students. Through reading and discussing culturally authentic literature, PSTs can have a window (Sims Bishop, 1990) experiences into the lives of their diverse student populations. The use of literature circles allowed participants to engage in honest conversation around events in the story, experiences had by the characters, and connections they could make to the character or theme of the book. They were not focused on reading with a critical, assignment-driven lens. They could sincerely focus on the story the author was trying to tell and the message being conveyed. Participants gained a deeper understanding of the value of implementing culturally and linguistically diverse texts into their classrooms. As one participant noted:

> Books and stories are bridges; they truly connect readers and learning. Which is why knowing exactly the reading material you pick as an educator is very important and making sure that the books and stories, we are sharing are inclusive and not just one-view narratives. Reflecting on the importance that books and literacy has in a classroom for all grade levels is something that made this assignment and project even more interesting and exciting to work on.

Another student reflected on the value of this project by stating:

> A key factor of this project, for me personally, was being able to read someone else's words through their perspective and their cultural and linguistic background. Through the perspectives of the characters, I was able to learn more to how they view and think about different aspects of their lives. As I, a college student, was reading I connected with this story and the characters because of a few shared aspects of my life and those expressed in the book.

The experiences and reflections of PSTs during this assignment are not meant to devalue the integration of peer-reviewed journal articles and research-based pedagogy but rather support that culturally informed literature should be the starting place for moving toward more culturally informed instruction. Through their reflections, participants showed a new understanding of the diverse students they will one day be working with. While the books presented are fictional, the events and challenges in the books reflect what elementary classroom students are facing. Experiences with loss, understanding, and appreciating one's identity, immigration, familial tensions, and coming of age are commonplace within schools. By sharing these stories through literature circles, independent reading, or read-alouds, classroom teachers can work to validate and bring awareness to the experiences of their culturally and linguistically diverse students. This developing awareness and understanding allow teachers and students to develop more empathy toward one another and create more meaningful dialogue by using culturally authentic texts as the catalyst.

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Culturally Relevant Sustaining Education (CR-SE): Transformative practices for ELA teachers who support ELL students utilizing equity tools

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Abstract

While teacher preparation programs have made progress in reorganizing their curricula to better assist English Language Learner (ELL) students, there is still a gap in preparing in-service teachers to instruct this population. When the perceptions of English Language Arts (ELA) teachers' abilities and self-efficacy were analyzed using the Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education (CR-SE) competencies, some teachers exhibited stated they could use more support to build their knowledge and practice to create equitable learning opportunities for English Language Learners (ELLs). Using the CR-SE competencies as a reference, this article aims to analyze secondary ELA instructors' perceptions of educating ELL students. Ten ELL ELA teachers participated in the study to determine their experiences about being prepared to help their ELL student groups. The findings revealed that instructors are devoted to educating diverse student populations but desire additional training and help in adopting and implementing new frameworks in their classrooms. The results have significance for state and district policymakers in supporting the growth of ELL students and their ELA teachers' success.

Keywords: Culturally Relevant Sustaining Education (CR-SE), English Language Arts (ELA), English Language Learners (ELL), Equity

Introduction

English language learners (ELLs) are steadily entering the United States (Olsen, 2014). The term ELLs will be utilized to describe emergent bilingual students in this paper as that is the term used in the study and the term used in the classroom where the study was conducted. Based on state and district assessments, there is a significant difference in academic performance between this group of students and their native English-speaking counterparts (Carnoy & Garcia, 2017; Gibson, 2016; Weyer, 2015). There has been much debate about appropriate practices to support the students mentioned above as they assimilate into the K-12 classrooms (Chen, 2015). The evidence of these results is highlighted in their performance scores in Reading assessments, Math assessments, and graduation rates. Furthermore, ELL students are faced with pronounced academic opportunity gaps, with many formative and summative results revealing performance levels from 23 to 30 points below their native English-speaking peers (National Education Association, 2013; Chen, 2015).

Across the nation, graduation rates show that equity in education has been a challenge unmet by diverse classrooms, specifically among students who are English learners. While teacher preparation programs have improved in revamping their programs to meet the needs of ELL students better, there is still a lack of effective preparation for in-service teachers to teach this target population (Barorene-Crowell, 2020; Samson & Collins, 2012). Research studying the effects of preparation on teacher performance has done little to quell the dispute over whether or not teachers are adequately trained. Research, however, indicates that teacher graduates of some education programs are more productive on average than graduates of other programs, demonstrating that preparedness can make a difference (Rickenbrode, 2018; Greenburg, 2013). In any case, there is a widespread belief among public educators that preparation programs do

not provide teachers with the necessary abilities, requiring districts to make adjustments. According to research, teaching instructors who reported inadequate training identified difficulties such as a lack of training on behavioral disruptions in the classroom, inadequate training for varied learning environments, and a lack of support for teaching in diverse, high-needs areas (Nelson, 2004; Stronge et al., 2011).

ELL students have historically been underserved, resulting in a significant academic disparity between them and their native English-speaking peers (Abedi, 2014; Gibson, 2016; Samuels, 2017). Traditionally, research on ELLs has focused on the academic differences between them and their native English-speaking peers, highlighting a constant struggle to improve and maintain high academic performance (Duran, 2008; Katz et al., 2021; Lekos & Saavedra, 2010). Although there have been improvements over the years, much work still needs to be done to support ELL students (Bowman-Perrott et al., 2016). For example, Coggshall et al. (2012) cited that some institutions improved the quality of the teacher candidate selection process; in addition to that, there has been an increase in the racial diversity of teachers hired to support diversity in the classroom (Shar et al., 2019). Moreover, many researchers have highlighted the plight of ELL teachers being effectively prepared to support ELL students, causing stagnancies and delayed improvement in their academic achievement (Beato, 2019; De Jong, 2005; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2016; Murphy & Torff, 2016). These previous works are essential as they promote arguments that advance the knowledge of supporting ELL students' academic success. Furthermore, research has acknowledged that without appropriate support, ELL students will continue to fall behind, and their teachers will continue to struggle to support them (Soland & Sandilos, 2021; Ahmed et al., 2016).

While some studies have shown the need for Culturally Relevant Teaching practices utilized as an m approach to support ELL (Herrera et al., 2012; Piazza et al., 2015), only a few states have implemented the components as a part of their required curriculum to support ELLs and their ELA teachers. The social justice education approach ensures that all students have equal access to and are nourished by educational opportunities. Becoming active in the community, being proactive in approaching the dissemination of knowledge, and fostering self-awareness and reflection are all critical components of the social justice approach (Ayers et al., 2009; Ayers et al., 2016).

Analyzing these teachers' perceptions of their knowledge and skills has been critically under-examined, especially using updated frameworks. For example, the New York Department of Education as well as the Pennsylvania Department of education, among other research (Alkhattaf, 2021; Polleck et al., 2021), have expressed that understanding of the Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education Competencies (CR-SE) framework and assuming them as one teaches has played a vital role in overall success for teachers and students as it relates to seeing diversity as a source of knowledge versus as a deficit. When implemented appropriately, the CR-SE components can be utilized as an equity tool for student achievement (Cole-Mallott et al., 2021). This concept was implemented by the New York State Education Department by introducing a road map. The state introduced three phases sequentially in this road map. The first phase consisted of awareness-raising, the second of capacity-building, and the third of full implementation. With this concept in mind, this article describes a study of ELA teachers utilizing the Pennsylvania CR-SE components as an equity tool to support their ELL students. This study reveals teachers' perceptions of their skills and abilities in the classrooms. The

findings help fill the research on how the CR-SE tool can allow equitable opportunities to teach and learn.

The academic opportunity gap between ELL students and native English speakers is slowly narrowing. There is a consensus that some programs only moderately prepare teachers to effectively teach ELL students consistently long term, leaving them ill-prepared (Chappell & Faltis, 2013). In a 2014 survey by the National Council on Teacher Quality, it was found that only 20 percent of programs provided effective strategies that can be used to support ELL students (Greenberg et al., 2015). A more recent assessment was utilized to assess further the need of ELL students, the Start Strong State Assessment. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic's impact on schooling, the Start Strong State Assessment was developed in New Jersey. Its ELA, Math, and Science assessments were created to help teachers and parents better understand the support their students would need as they begin a new school year. The primary goal of the Start Strong Assessment, like the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA), is to give teachers and school administrators information about the needs of kids as they return to school. The test is given at the beginning of the school year and is based on the preceding grade's or high school's unique learning standards. More support for English language learners (ELL) was clear from the Start Strong State Assessments of the 20-21 school year. Subgroup analysis of ELL children in grade 4 ELA yielded distinct results from those of other groups. For example, they had valid scores of 12260, with level 1 scores of 68.4 percent, level 2 scores of 16.4 percent, and level 3 scores of 15.2 percent. This compares to another native English-speaking subgroup whose valid scores were 34920, with level 1, 30.01 percent, level 2 (24.2 percent), and level 3 (45.7 percent). According to Coady et al. (2011), K-12 teachers posit they are inadequately prepared by their programs to teach these learners effectively.

Researchers found that less than half the states in the nation required teachers to be exposed to relevant education or development for teaching ELL students (Gras & Kitson, 2021; Quintero & Hansen, 2017); also, some state requirements for those who teach ELL students are not aligned with what research has said is vital for student success. Many teachers have voiced their challenges, stating that some of their needs are to observe highly effective teachers, be mentored, and receive ongoing professional learning (Gándara & Santibañez, 2016; López et al., 2013). Of the approximately 40 percent of public school teachers working with ELL students, less than 13 percent state they have adequate training to support this group, ultimately making it more difficult for all subgroups of students to have equitable performance opportunities (Quintero & Hansen, 2017). Murphey (2014) posited that ELL students would remain at a high risk of performing at a lower level than their counterparts without appropriate and continuous support. Similarly, Coady et al. (2016) advocated for classroom learning environments supported by equity and inclusivity, fostering ELL student learning and achievement. Efforts centered on providing new and inventive ways to address these ongoing difficulties, such as investigating how ELL instructors are supported and strategizing to create an environment favorable to learning and achievement, are critical to moving education forward.

Theoretical Framework

The Culturally Relevant-Sustaining Education (CR-SE) framework intends to help stakeholders create a student-centered learning space that affirms students elevate marginalized voices, develop students' abilities, and empower them. This framework creates opportunities to design and implement sustainable ideas for the implementation of policies to ensure that all students are accommodated equitably and supported appropriately. Graduation rates across the country demonstrate that fairness in education has been a challenge that has gone unfulfilled by

diverse classrooms, particularly among students who are English Learners (ELs). Adopting a Culturally Relevant Sustaining Education (CR-SE) is necessary for school districts and educator preparation programs nationally, as this is an essential part of challenging structural and systemic inequalities in the K-20 space (Cole-Malott et al., 2021; Johnston et al., 2017). K-12 educators understand that to be culturally relevant; they must constantly rethink how to do critical equity work from different positionalities. The CR-SE framework is one way to utilize guiding principles as an asset-based pedagogical approach in teaching and learning and to allow for progress with students (Cole-Malott et al., 2021; Paris, 2012; Taylor & Ladson-Billings, 2009). The authors' teaching experiences in educating ELL students and collaborative efforts with in-service ELL teachers and support staff reveal a consistent lack of knowledge, support, and expertise in incorporating Culturally Relevant Sustaining Education practices is still evident.

Culturally relevant teaching, as guided by theories such as culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and culturally sustaining pedagogy (Gay, 2010), is not the same but shares similar principles in that they are committed to collective empowerment and cultural integrity in their approach to student success. High-quality instruction is essential when bridging persistent achievement gaps (Nieto, 2010). hooks (1994) notes that a teacher who values the gifts students bring to the classroom may impact them the most. Each student brings a voice, a set of experiences and knowledge, and know-how that is a way of seeing, thinking, and being. Each, again, is an unruly spark of meaning-making energy on a voyage of discovery (Ayers, 2004, p. 41). Flyn et al. (2017) highlighted that the characteristics of a culturally relevant educator include a teacher who feels a sense of commitment and cultural integrity to students and creates an inclusive, encouraging community in the classroom while preparing them for society (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Esposito & Swain, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2009). In this learning space,

the students and teachers are respectful to each other, are accepting of diverse backgrounds and perspectives, and there are opportunities to engage as students learn together in the classroom community.

The teacher above works arduously to recognize their own biases, their cultural identity, and privilege yet, imposes high expectations for the present and future and exposes students to a curriculum that utilizes their funds of knowledge (Gonzalez et al., 2006), cultural experiences as well as promotes growth (Broom, 2019; Hawkins-Jones & Reeves, 2020; Ladson-Billings, 1995). With that in mind, The Pennsylvania Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education (CR-SE) Competencies were utilized as a guide to provide support for the teachers in this study. The CR-SE competencies are expressed in the form of behavioral expectations, complemented by actionable indicators and reflexive questions that help put the expectations into context in real-world situations. The reflexive questions are intended to support educators in thinking more deeply about the practical application of each ability and the implications. The CR-SE competencies were chosen as a tool for this group of teachers. They were created to support and guide an equitable approach and implement innovative strategies and ideas beneficial for all students (Cole-Mallot et al., 2021). The competencies are listed in the table below:

Table 1

The PA CR-SE Competencies

Competency	Target Focus
1	Reflect on One's Cultural Lens
2	Identify, Deepen Understanding of, and Take Steps to Address Bias in the System
3	Design and Facilitate Culturally Relevant Learning that Brings Real World Experiences into Educational Spaces

4	Provide all Learners with Equitable and Differentiated Opportunities to Learn and Succeed
5	Promote Asset-based Perspectives about Differences
6	Collaborate with Families and Communities through Authentic Engagement Practices
7	Communicate in Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Ways that Demonstrate Respect for Learners, Educators, Educational Leaders and Families
8	Establish High Expectations for Each Learner and Treat Them a Capable and Deserving of Achieving Success
9	Educate Oneself About Microagressions, Their Impact on Diverse Learners, Educators, and Families and Actively Disrupt the Practice by Naming and Challenging its Use

Note: From the Pennsylvania Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education Competencies by Cole-Malott, D., Parker Thompson, K., Whitaker, R. and Peterson Ansari, R. (https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/donna+cclark%40reading.org/FMfcgzGpGTBZMmWFZHcgwljXmFLHWPML?projector=1). Copyright 2021 by the State of Pennsylvania.

Methods and Technique

For the sake of this paper, I utilized ELL/EL and ESOL interchangeably to refer to students whose native language is other than English. Data sources included a detailed analysis of results from a pilot study and self-reflections from teacher participants on instruction and implementation of supplemental instruction, remediation, scaffolding, and differentiation practices. The researcher analyzed teacher classroom practices along with Start Strong NJ State Assessment ELA, Math and Science scores of ELL students and an anonymous data reflective tool from the teacher participants. Moreover, data were collected from focus group discussions and teacher observations conducted throughout the study for thematic results. Teachers were observed in the traditional face-to-face classes as well as virtually at least once biweekly to

discuss challenges or progress made throughout the study, which was formative and summative assessment scores of ELL students with the intent to increase achievement. This analysis sought to guide teacher conversations on: How prepared do teachers feel to teach ELL students? What are some ways in which the CR-SE components can help support equitable innovative practices in ELA? How can the tenets of CR-SE help to create systemic change in how teachers are trained and how they are supported in K-12 systems?

Data Sources

A qualitative research approach was used because it was rigorous, reliable, and valid (Morse et al., 2002). The sample was acquired through convenience sampling. Several teachers were contacted at the beginning of the 20-21 school year via email and word of mouth, and ten committed to being a part of the study. Of the 10 participants, four were African American, four were Caucasian, and two were Hispanic. All teachers have National Board Certification, six of whom have a master's degree and two currently seeking their doctoral degrees. Of the ten participants, 3 obtained the English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) endorsement, and five had specific ESOL student training. Several of the other 7 participants had taken at least one or more ESOL classes for accreditation.

Data Collection

A series of formal discussions were held with each of the ten participating teachers. Throughout the five months (January to May), these formal interviews lasted between 30 and 90 minutes and acted as an ongoing dialogue between the teachers and the researcher. For instance, the teachers were introduced to the CR-SE competencies at the beginning of the study. They were given time to familiarize themselves with the concepts, plan how they would implement them in their classrooms, and then implement them (on a small scale) over the semesters. The

teachers were allowed to share their opinions and experiences with encountering and working with each competency in both individual and group discussions (two-hour focus group sessions). Conversations in the two focus groups primarily centered on how participants may enhance their comprehension and effectively incorporate the concepts into their daily activities. During the talks, the instructors posed further questions to elucidate their perspectives on the reality versus the expectations of the competencies in their classrooms. All of the conversations with the teachers were audiotaped, transcribed, and coded for analysis. From their responses, I discovered personal information about the teachers' perspectives and obtained insight into their comfort with the competencies and plans.

The first focus group's mission was to determine the areas in which the teachers thought they required assistance to fulfill the needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students. This was also when the teachers shared their experiences with implementing social justice in the classroom. A qualified researcher who has had extensive experience with the CR-SE framework was present to help facilitate the discussions with the teachers. As a group, we discussed potential solutions based on the teachers' concerns to help them counteract any barriers. At the second meeting of the focus group, the instructors were given an update on the plan that had been proposed at the first meeting and were asked for feedback on how well they had implemented the concepts that had been discussed at the first gathering. During the focus group, each participant was given a written anonymous reflective tool consisting of open-ended questions to which they were required to provide detailed responses. The purpose of this tool was to assist in guiding the participants' thoughts and discussions on experiences they had throughout the research process with ELL students.

Based on the discussions in the focus groups, responses were analyzed using discourse analysis (Gee, 2010; Gee & Handford, 2013) which allowed for a clear understanding of the participants' experiences with working with ELL students and their knowledge of equitable tools to support their students. I analyzed the data from the discussions for themes and patterns, examined individual statements, considered cultural references, and interpreted the data for findings. To better understand how teachers felt about their abilities as ELL teachers, the following questions were asked: "How prepared do you feel to teach ESOL students? What do you think ESOL students need to be academically successful in the classroom? How have they implemented the CR-SE components in their pedagogical approach?"

Findings

The themes that emerged as a direct result of the protocol were: a) perceptions of accommodating linguistically diverse populations; b) perceptions of equity tools; and c) perceptions of the CR-SE competencies. To investigate the experiences of 10 secondary school teachers regarding the induction of the CR-SE implementation and their view of reflexivity, some summary statements, and direct quotes were shared. The voices of these ELL teachers who are currently supporting ELL students are needed to understand how to support them further as they teach. Even though their experiences with teaching were diverse, as was the amount of support they had in the past with their ESOL endorsements, it is important to hear the voices of these teachers that are currently supporting this subgroup of students are needed to understand how to support them further as they teach. The results reflect mixed experiences regarding teacher preparation and support and their perception of their efficacy regarding equitable practices. These findings reveal ongoing concerns about support from administrators relating to equitable opportunities when supporting ELL student populations. The teacher participants'

perceptions of the support they receive from their superiors reflect a broader academic issue that trickles down to the classroom and potentially impacts student achievement.

Perception of Accommodating Linguistically Diverse Populations

As the cultural and linguistic diversity of students in schools continues to grow, it is essential that educators, administrators, and other professionals have the knowledge and training necessary to effectively instruct and cater to the requirements of diverse students. They need to be flexible to assist students in overcoming the linguistic and cultural obstacles that stand in the way of their education. Garcia (2002) posits, "In order to educate them, we must first educate ourselves about who they are and what they need to succeed. Thinking differently involves viewing these students in new ways that may contradict conventional notions" (p.258). The theme of understanding teachers' perception of accommodating linguistically diverse student populations was reflected in the discussions. When the teacher participants were asked to reflect on their own experiences with accommodating ELL students in the classroom, most indicated many struggles that prevent them from being as effective as possible. As an exemplar for this theme, on their perceptions of struggling to support ELL students, participants reflected on their own experiences. One teacher participant stated: "I have a paraprofessional who helps me in my classroom. If it weren't for her I do not know what I would do." She explained that she has a large Portuguese-speaking ELL student population. She felt fortunate enough that her paraprofessional support also spoke Portuguese and was able to aid her in translating the content as she explained it in her class. Outside of that help, she stated she felt ill-equipped to assist the students extensively on her own. Although not all teachers shared this perspective, it was clear they had concerns about the support system they were receiving compared to what they needed.

Some teachers attributed their difficulties to their administrators' lack of support. After detailed discussions, the teachers expressed their belief that administrators may also require assistance to guide teachers working with ELL students. One teacher participant stated: “If administrators were more onboard and supportive in finding ways to educate us, and allow us to learn ourselves and implement it, it would be helpful to us (sic).” Another participant added, “a school environment is successful based on the leadership, we have lost the community feeling because we are so focused on data (sic).” The overwhelming majority responded that periodic district training was missing necessary, impactful components. The excerpts from the teacher narratives shared in the discussion conveyed a sense of urgency to find solutions. Overall, the teachers were articulate in voicing their needs as they had the linguistically diverse students’ best interests in mind and were familiar with what would assist them in their academic success.

Awareness of Equity tools for ELLs

When questioned about their knowledge of equitable tools to support their ELL students, most of the teacher participants indicated simple translation software (e.g., Google translate) and worksheets to assist them in translating the content into multiple languages, according to the findings. Based on the summative and formative assessment results, they highlighted their quest to find equitable ways to support their students in each content area. In the group discussion, we discussed classroom teaching practices concerning approaches to emerging ELL students in second grade (6-12) levels. Aside from the translation apps, many teacher participants said they relied heavily on other students to help the emerging students engage with the content.

To further the conversations in the focus groups, the facilitator posed the question about how each teacher engaged their students in whole group lessons and class discussions and their approach to scaffolding and differentiation of class content. While some teachers utilized

differentiation and scaffolding suggestions from the district scoping sequences and strategies from their content area coaches, some of the participants explained that they relied on each other to share strategies they found the most impactful. One teacher participant noted: “I do shut down the students if they are wrong because there are just some ways that are wrong when working on particular items of a problem.” The teacher participant admitted she needed to work on addressing the students if they were not going in the right direction. She wanted to learn to be better at “praising more and attacking less.” Other participants added their input, stating, “It’s a real struggle when I have a student who speaks French, and I am unable to help them.” The participant continued, “if it were not for a French-speaking student who helps me translate for that student, then we would both be lost.” On further probing, the participants expressed that many of them did not have a daily “plan” created directly for ELL students. The previous comments reveal a strong sense of willingness to receive support and learn but also highlight concerns about the ramifications of insufficient teacher training.

Perceptions of Engaging with the CR-SE Competencies

The CR-SE competencies were imparted to the participants in the form of an equitable classroom teaching and learning solution. There were nine competencies described previously; however, the participants identified a few that they felt might be difficult to engage with and adopt. The following are the competencies discussed at great length because some participants needed more time to process. Each competency has several main points that help explain the point and questions associated with them to help guide discussions. For example, Competency 1: Reflect on One’s Cultural Lens, this component asks instructors to reflect on their own lives and experiences and to engage critically in difficult conversations with others to unlock any areas of unconscious biases, prejudice, or stereotypes. Some of the questions associated with this

competency to stimulate reflexivity are: How will I recognize, be conscious of, and respond to my uncomfortableness, resistance, and emotions that might arise as I continue to examine and increase awareness of my own biases and stereotypes? Another question associated with the competency that was heavily discussed was, to what degree do I understand that the work of being a Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Educator is challenging and required questions, deep critical thinking, reflexivity, engagement, collaboration, action steps, and more? And while doing this work, how will I give full attention to my mental and emotional well-being to sustain and honor myself? Another competency that was heavily discussed was Competency 2: Identify, Deepen Understanding of and Take Steps to Address Bias in the System. This competency focused on educators intentionally making efforts to remove biased in their teaching materials, curriculum, and teaching techniques. A question associated with this component was, in what ways am I complicit in enabling bias in my educational settings: Do I stay silent? Do I allow discrimination? Do I take action to address and mitigate bias? While they did not all want their exact responses to be shared, there were mixed emotions regarding how to effectively do this without being offended by the question itself and focusing more on the outcome and its impact on doing a self-analysis.

For many of the teachers, this was their first time interacting with the competencies, and some stated they needed time to process how they would be able to engage and use it as a tool. Overall, the teachers shared experiences and anticipated experiences that they might encounter with the competencies in mind. They highlighted the difficulty with the strategies they have used prior but were open to learning more about implementing other strategies. When ELL students have not yet mastered a skill in their first language, it can be challenging for some teachers to motivate pupils to retain, learn, and apply English-language information. A reoccurring theme

was the teachers expressing their need to effectively support the growing population of ELL students in their classes. They understood that the ELL students' achievement is important, considering they were to be assessed using the same state and district assessments as their native English-speaking peers. There is some difficulty when some teachers attempt to get students to retain, acquire and apply knowledge in English when sometimes the ELL students have not yet mastered that skill in their first language.

Discussion

While the sample of teachers interviewed in the study was very small and cannot be generalized, the excerpts and summarizations of the discussions above shed light on the insights into these ten in-service teachers' experiences. First, they all believed that they were capable of teaching students but could use more adequate support to assist them in teaching. One poignant point highlighted was that the teachers who had more traditional training had more interactions with ESOL strategies they could use in the classroom and therefore felt more comfortable than those with non-traditional training as teachers.

Suppose teacher preparation programs make a significant difference in preparing teachers to support all students. In that case, they must not only be committed to retaining teachers but also to providing them with innovative and sustainable ideas, such as CR-SE. During the discussion of the CR-SE competencies, the teacher participants were able to engage in reflexive thinking self-assess and share areas of success and necessary growth for themselves. When given the CR-SE components as a guide to self-assess, one participant noted, "After reading these components, we don't feel like we have a voice; we no longer have that culture that was once created in the school." Another participant added,

> Of all the questions in general, what first came to me as I had difficulty in answering some because I feel the ELL students don't get any of the help they need, they are almost pushed to the side sometimes, so when I answered this, I tried to implement things that I believe in but not necessarily because I am seeing it. (Teacher participant)

These replies suggested that classroom teachers are open to learning and willing to implement the provided guided support models. Being thrust into the classroom without sufficient experience can limit and impede the teachers' perception of their abilities and potentially be disastrous in the classroom.

This study aimed to examine secondary ELA teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy as it relates to utilizing the CR-SE components to support their ELL students. Collectively, these secondary teachers' experiences can be shared with other in-service teachers or preservice teachers in potential licensure and preparation programs to assist principals, coaches, intervention specialists, etc. In addition, all stakeholders should be aware of the obstacles that impede the success of all students, especially in light of the exponential growth of ELL students.

Recent criticism of teacher education programs has focused on the need for more rigorous and high-quality training for teachers of diverse student populations (Evans & Leonard, 2013). This paper's findings reveal a multitude of considerations for supporting ELL ELA teachers who are struggling with the demands of their state and district requirements. The CR-SE framework promotes a comprehensive understanding of engaging with diversity and employing equitable approaches to facilitate lifelong learning. Researchers and educators recognize that it is impossible to master and implement all competencies simultaneously and that they cannot be utilized in isolation. The results indicated that cultural competence support is essential for the

success of all teachers, regardless of their race or length of experience in the field of education. The participants in this study perceived that their district and school administrators lacked self-efficacy in creating professional development opportunities and modeling CR-SE competencies for teachers. Nonetheless, despite the pervasive obstacles that some may face each school year, all ELA participants were open to learning and engaging with new frameworks and ideologies that have the potential to support the academic success of their ELL students.

This study acknowledges that equity and inclusivity are required for the planning and implementation of practice for the success of ELL students. This work is relevant because it creates opportunities for collaboration in K-20 spaces and informs policies and systemic adjustments to facilitate engaging conversations in literacy while also considering multiple content areas. In contrast to previous research, this investigation focuses on the self-perception of ELL ELA teachers through the lens of the CR-SE components. Simply put, this research contributes evidence pertinent to effectively informing and enhancing teacher preparation to work efficiently with ELL students to promote success.

To promote equity and inclusion, the recommended CR-SE strategies should be implemented as an innovative approach to support in-service teachers and introduced to pre-service teachers to augment their resource pool. School districts can employ a gradual release model approach to strengthen teacher training and work toward the goal of supporting students in improving their academic performance. This strategy considers the students, the instructors, and the general community as important variables in effecting change; hence, it has the potential to have a significant impact. These ideas are alluded to by Paris and Alim (2017) in their support for teachers in critically and meaningfully focusing on community knowledge and developing community input and agency throughout learning and teaching.

This paper has generated ideas to target such issues that will yield both teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Therefore, a model of effective teaching can be created by analyzing the implementation of current teaching practices and the introduction of new approaches. For ELL teachers, it is essential to have opportunities to consistently reflect on modern practices for high-needs student populations. Based on the teacher data, there is no doubt that both traditional and nontraditional preparation programs and state and district administrators can do more to support their instructors effectively. This preparation must be inclusive of applicable and pragmatic methods to help support ELL ELA teachers as the considerations for diversity and inclusivity is integral for academic success for all stakeholders.

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